Doing Pastoral Care Among Young Adults and the Youth A Diaconal Concern

Betty A. Ndea Søvik

VID vitenskapelige høgskole

Diakonhjemmet Oslo

Masteroppgave

Master i Diakonia

Antall ord: 28320

Dato 15 November 2016

Supervisor: Dr Anne Austad

DOING PASTORAL CARE AMONG THE YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS.
A DIACONAL CONCERN

Dissertation submitted in part
fulfilment of the
Requirements of the Master degree
in Diakonia, VID Specialized
University

Betty Abena Ndea Søvik
Supervisor: Dr Anne Austad

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I thank God for the travelling mercy between nations and cities during my studies.

I am very grateful to my supervisor Dr Anne Austad who steered me through the murky waters of the whole dissertation process. Her prompt answers to my queries, insightful comments, and her professional aptitude in directing and guiding me throughout this research work is immensely appreciated.

Thank you to all my teachers at VID Specialized University – Diakonhjemmet Campus. A special thank you goes to Kari Karsrud Korslien for encouraging words that light a candle in my heart forever, Thank you.

Thank you to Anne Dieseth for all the phone enquiries and help you gave throughout my study. You are an angel, thank you.

Thank you to my son and my daughter you are my gems, thank you for putting up with a student mom.

Last but not the least I would never have completed this degree without the support of my husband whose encouragement, trust and belief in me has been the fuel that I run on. Thank you my dearest.

I would like to acknowledge our dog Cindy for demanding to be taken out even when I am so busy studying, but this gave me the break that I needed to get fresh air to my brain.

Table of Contents

Chapter 3 Methodology

Chapter 4 Data analysis & Interpretation

Chapter 5 Discussion

ABSTRACT

This research is about pastoral care among the youth and young adults. It is the study of how best the youth and young adult in our society can find and get the help that the society can offer to them. The study is not limited to only the youth and young adults who are Christians, but includes all youth and young adults irrespective of beliefs. In the introduction of the dissertation, I explore the term pastoral care and examine how it is applied and to whom and for whom pastoral care is directed. I study the youth and young adults who fit into this description and their understanding of what pastoral care is about. The study stresses the importance of good listening skills when carrying out pastoral care. Being aware of the hurts that can results as an outcome of callouses response to what is being communicated is also important. Good techniques are the keys to good pastoral care giving. Listening with ones' feelings as well as ones full attention are important traits in this field. Important issues that arose while carrying out this study included in general, that young people did not know that pastoral care exist for all types of grievances. The study revealed that the youth and young adults do not know about the pastoral care service and the opportunity that it provides in terms of counselling. Some participants expressed the need to have pastoral care for the youth and young adults on a neutral place rather than in the church office. The study suggests the need for a place, where the young people can come in and talk to a competent professional pastoral care giver without a referral or appointment. Personal accounts show that there are many youth and young adults who go behind the "walls" of misery because the problems they are facing do not need a medical or psychiatrists treatment. Hence the study echoes the need to have someone to talk to, someone who can listen and give advice when needed. A number of relevant literatures which are related to the research topic were reviewed. The research questions were categorized into relevant themes. The study concludes with some suggestions as to how the availability of pastoral care can be made better known to the youth and young adults.

Key words: Pastoral care, counselling, care, grief, peer pressure, mass media related stress.

Chapter 1 Study introduction

1. Introduction

"Can I talk to you about something" she asked almost unsure if she has the right to want "talk to" me about something. "Of course you can. Do you want us to sit here and talk or do you want us to go somewhere else more private" I asked her. She chose to go somewhere private. We went outside the building and sat on a bench. She was holding her mobile phone with earphones in her ears. As soon as we got seated, she removed her earphone from her ears, looked at the message on her phone and said: "I do not know how to say this but I want to talk to you about it anyhow". She is a very reserved youth, quit responsible but very reserved. I wondered what she wanted to talk about, but was also glad that she wanted to talk to me about whatever the message on her phone was about.

"There are problems at home, and this is not a new situation" she said. According to her this is an ongoing problem involving the whole family, and because of these problems, she has been going to BUP (Barn og Ungdomspsykiatri), because of the situation at home. The message was about an invitation to visit a family member in a confined institution.

"I love my family, and the abuse is not intentional, it is just…." She continued to pour her anxiety and almost excusing herself for the situation that she and the rest of her family members are victims of. I can sense the guilty in her voice, but her story indicated that she has nothing to do with how that one family member "terrorised" the rest of the family. She has absolutely no reason to feel guilty or shame.

I thanked her for sharing her dilemma with me, but she replied "I should thank you; it was so nice to talk to you, for the first time I felt like someone really listened to me". I asked her if I could give her a hug, and her answer was yes. I gave her a well meaningful hug.

In recent years, the researcher has met a number of youth and young adults going through diverse problems, and some of these problems are not physical health related problems. These problems range from stress, grief and loss, self-esteem issues, depression and the meaning of life related problems. Some of the issues that the youth are facing are issues that they find challenging, and therefore need someone to talk to about, someone who will listen to them and not judge them or diagnose them. This notion of not being listened to is one of many cases that the populace of children, youth and young adults struggle with every day.

Pastoral care can serve as an alternative to "formal counselling". By formal counselling the researcher means counselling done by professional psychologists and psychiatrists or priests who have gone through specialist training to carry out such functions as counsellors in addition to their theological professionals. **Counselling** is a broad term category that encompasses many different fields of specialities, and which gives varieties of clarities and empowerments opportunities in a number of counselling sub-fields, (Lynch, 2002). **Pastoral care** the way it is used in this dissertation, has a less formal character and here it is seen as that which plays an enabling role by empowering people to increase the constructiveness of their behaviour as well as their feelings and attitudes especially during crisis and losses in their lives as individuals or families (Clinebell, 1984). This is particular in Norway where "sjelesorg" which is translated to English and has acquired the meaning of "pastoral care" operates and is more in inter changeable between the more informal pastoral care and the more professional trained pastoral counselling.

Pastoral care givers may be contacted and consulted in all situations. They may in turn use their discretion and refer their confidants to specialists if they deem the situation deserve specialist knowledge and expertise. Pastoral care does provide a safe, confidential "room" for clients who seek for help. According to John Patton, pastoral care focuses on empowering the individuals who seek for their services, to resolve their difficulties by encouraging and supporting these individuals build their resilience and re-establish their self-confidence and self-sufficiency ways of handling difficult situations, (Patton, 2005).

1.1 Background and interest

The researcher's interest in researching pastoral care among the youth and young adults (**used interchangeable with young people in this paper**) stems from various reasons. Among these are the facts that there are so many young people these days that are going through lots of difficulties in their lives, due to either bullying at school, exclusions from peer groups both in social media and physical society, family problems due to divorce and others, pressures from work and school, and life in general. The researcher has always been interested in working with people of all ages, but she has a special connection with children, and young people, and in fact the researcher gets on well with these groups of people. Furthermore, the researcher has met young people who suffer

from the stress and pressure that the modern society's ways of living has perpetuated. The model of life as shown daily on TV and other social medias has set the modern bar of standard code so high that, the expectations of perfection, and the desire to meet the expected goals, and be a perfect young person[1] put so much pressure on the youth that some of them find themselves at a loss (ungdata@nova.hioa.no) read on 28/06/2016).

Furthermore, as the researcher has continued to observe the society and understand the Norwegian language better, she has come to know that there are other issues that have tainted a large number of members of the Norwegian society – bullying. There is often news in the Norwegian media about bullying among the children, youth and young adults. Acts of bullying leave lifelong lasting scars in the lives of the victims. It is therefore important to have very good counselling systems at different levels of accessibilities.

The researcher has personally spoken to families whose children have suffered bullying actions and young people who have been bullied and have experienced acts of exclusion behaviour in the schools. The researcher has listened to testimonies of some students who had never got to be chosen to work in the same group with the "popular" students. These young people were totally worn out by these situations. The bullying experiences turned the lives of some of these young people upside down. The experiences caused them to develop all sorts of physical and psychological problems which include eating disorder, self-inflicted physical destruction, panic attacks, drops in school grades, further into not wanting to go to school, and finally into fully psychological problem that for some is still an ongoing process even as the researcher writes this paper.   Some of these youth went to BUP when the problems were in an advanced stage. The cases gave me the desire and a wish to look closely at what the church community can do to help our young people who might be subject to these inhuman acts.

Our youth should get the help they need to solve their problems from the onset of the situations. There are different types of good care services available, including the care provided by the church, but there is a need to be more effective in letting the young people know that pastoral care is available to all who need it and especially to those who may need someone else's counsel besides the family and the other professional organs.

---

[1] See Sletten's PDF Barn I Norge 2015

The young people of today encounter more challenges at their every turn in life than before. Some of these problems are constructed by modern society's social order of information technology that is readily available even to the infant babies. These challenges exert surmountable stress on the youth to the extent that the stress results in physical pain (NOVA report 8/15). Pastoral care givers have professional qualification to meet these young people and have positive impact on them. Pastoral care and counselling may include raising people's consciousness to be more aware of the societal roots of their individual pain, brokenness, and truncated growth (Clinebell, 1984). They have the time to listen to these young people and allow them to be themselves. Pastoral care givers can tell about the loving God through their actions, and by re-assuring these young people that they are good as they are.

The genuine care and concern that is shown to these young people do result in some of them sharing their confidential information. Some of them are revealing their most vulnerable sides, and the pastoral care giver has to help these young people by reassuring them that they are worthy, and they are loved. These vulnerabilities indicate that there is a need for a pastoral care service dedicated especially to the youth and young adults in the municipalities. This is in accordance with the definition of diakonia as stated in the Church of Norway's plan for diakonia which states that "diakonia is the caring ministry of the church, (Church of Norway Plan for Diakonia 2008).

Dealing with the young people's concerns, should be established on the bases of what the young people themselves believe is their needs. We have to examine what these needs are, what the anticipation to meet their needs are and how we can implement the findings into becoming activated actions of helping the young people in the society they live. The researcher together with other members of staff is involved in working with the active youth in the church ministry through Mini Lederkurs (MILK). Interacting with these youth and listening to their wishes for the church is often a mirror for the church staff to reflect and improve the services for the young people. The members of MILK group are true representatives of the young people in various categories of issues. However, the MILK group only represents the wishes of those who are Christians, while this research is more about rendering pastoral care to all young people in the society.

1.2 The African experience

The researcher's interest in the topic was also informed by previous work and experience with children, youth and young adults, which the researcher did when living in Africa. Most African Christian as well as none Christian youth would rather share their general problems with people who work in the church or other religious organisations. Healy puts it this way: "To the African, religion is like the skin that you carry along with you wherever you are, not like the cloth that you wear now and discard...the next moment" (Healy 1981, p.14). This is true because, the researcher's own church cultural up-bringing may have influenced the researcher's understanding of the Norwegian church's culture. Culture is a very difficult concept to define, because it consists of ideals, values and assumptions about life that guide specific behaviours (Berry et al. 2002). Christian Beeta makes the following observation: "Traditionally in Ghana, the solution to all problems of ill-health, as of concern or anxiety generally has been sought squarely within the framework of religion" (Beeta 1967, p.51). These problems may range from family problems to bullying by peers, or social problems like boyfriend girlfriend related issues. The issues about health are not often discussed except if it is terminal illnesses of a loved one.

1.3 The role of modern societies and their effects on young people

Today's societies (these include Europe and the rest of the world) are run with efficiency that almost makes the power of God invisible. As the researcher interacts with the local people of this society, she hears references to living in circular societies, and exercising freedom of association more often. Circular ideas are often lauded and freedom of association is misconstrued to minimise or eliminate Christian or dominant religious values (as if living in circular society, and exercising the freedom of association entail diminishing the Supremacy of God). Living in circular society, and exercising the freedom of association are good principles, but may not have to replace God's divine intervention especially when it comes to showing kindness and treating others with love and respect. This is in reference to rampart acts of bullying among young people, broken relationships and the likes that destroy the wellbeing of the young people.

How can we put off our Christian faith in order to go into communities of people proclaiming the love of our neighbour which is a biblical saying[2]? In what power and under whose authority will we be conducting these "doing good to all people"[3] if not through God's love? These kinds of questions remain on the back of the researcher's mind, when she is carrying out her duties as a deacon, and they serve as her guiding principles.

1.4 The importance of this research

This research seeks to identify the problems that hinder the young people from seeking the help they need from the church. The Church of Norway sees itself as a serving church. It is identified and defined as the people's church (visjonsdokument 2015-2018). This means that the Church of Norway sees and is seen as belonging to everyone, it is an inclusive church. Diakonia is a characteristic of the total mission of the church (Plan for daikon 2009), and diakonia ministry influences the church's fellowship and the life of the individual believer. This is one of the fundamental goals of the Norwegian church and especially its diakonia work and activities. Pastoral care takes a central part of the church staff members' everyday work. If this is one of the fundamental goals of the Norwegian church, then it is up to those who work in the church offices to make the pastoral care functions and professional capabilities known in the communities the church is meant to serve. It is hoped that this research will shed light on the hindrances, and highlight what motivation is needed to be in place so that the young people can feel comfortable to seek for pastoral care and share their problems with the pastoral care giver (who may be a priest, a deacon or a catechist).

The researcher's quest for this topic is further guided by the fact that, even though the church is open to everyone, including the young people to come and talk to the pastoral care givers of the church, there seems to be a lack of motivation to do that on the part of the young people. The researcher is interested to know what measures need to be put in place, and what contents would the young people be interested in, so that pastoral care service is clearly defined, understood and obviously reachable by all who need it. The hypothesis of this study is that the youth and young adults would seek for help from the

---

[2] Mark 16:15 Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation.
[3] Galatians 6:10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

church if they feel connected to the church more than when they are do not feel connected to the church.

It is hoped that this paper will find ways to inform our young people about pastoral care as another free service that is available to them. Moreover, it is hoped that the findings of the study will help us and others like us enlighten the society about the care that the church gives and for the society to see the church as a sanctuary of peace, a place where everyone is seen as they are, and a place of refuge for anyone, especially those who are facing adversity of various forms. Again, it is hoped that the study findings will help in developing better ways of serving all of our youth and young adults better, not only when they have lost their loved ones in death, but also when they encounter different types of social problems.

The church can work as a facilitator of peace in families that are struggling with relationship either as married couples, parents towards their children especially their teens, and any other behavioural problems that are not yet a psychiatrics' problem, or one can alternates between these institutions, because they do have different approaches to solve these problems.

1.5 Research question

There are social issues in every culture and society that need to be addressed by all organs that provide any form of counselling or help when crisis arises. Different care providing organisations and institutions are necessary for the wellbeing of all the people who need them or who may benefit from them directly or indirectly. The question remains, why the children, youth and young adults do not readily seek for pastoral care? Is it because they are not aware that pastoral care service is available not only for those who have lost a loved one through death but also for any other type of problems? This inquiring mind enables the researcher to formulate a series of research questions. Of these, the overarching questions are:

1. How can pastoral care become more available to young people for care taking and counselling?

Two related secondary questions that might help to shed light on the core concerns of the enquiry are:

a). Do the youth and young adults in particular know and understand what pastoral care and practices involve?

b).What contents and form of pastoral care would young people be interested in?

The objective of the research question is to find out from the study what should be done so that the youth and young adults could see pastoral care service as one of the services available to all people living in a community. Furthermore, the study aims at identifying and recommending possible ways to deal with some of the challenges that the youth and young adults face by examining what the contents and forms of pastoral care the young people would be interested in.

These questions are relevant for this study in order to inform the readers about the views of the participants in this study.

It is in the interest of this study to find out if the society is aware that there is a pastoral care service available to all people despite age or creed in general, but in particular the study is interested in finding out the awareness of the pastoral care service among the youth and young adults. To find out the answer to these questions the researcher interviewed the youth and young adults in the municipality. Having elaborated the reasons of the interest in researching pastoral care among the youth and young adults, the researcher shall now briefly define some of the terms that are used in this chapter and their application in this paper.

1.6 What is pastoral care?

There are quite substantial literatures on pastoral care (Eide, 2014; Kirkwood, 2012; Lartey, 2003; Engedal, 2004). Many scholars have come up with various definitions of what pastoral care is. Simplistically definition of pastoral care is care that is given to people who have or are experiencing grief and other crisis that befall a person, a family or a community. Furthermore, the term gives an indication of care giving by religious ministers only. However, pastoral care is a holistic professional care that is carried out by both religious ministers, deacons and other qualified members of community of faith (Clinebell & McKeever, 2011).

In this study, pastoral care refers to all types of grievances, resulting from unfortunate situations including bullying in school, poor relationship at home, in addition to the

issues reflected to above. Pastoral care is the practical arm of pastoral theology – pastoral theology seeks to bring religious and moral meanings to bear on the needs, problems and activities of everyday human experiences. This includes interpretation of their significance, understanding their etiology, and guiding appropriate healing interventions (McClure, 2010). Pastoral counselling on the other hand is a ministry of care that is more structured and focused on specifically articulated need or concern than is pastoral care (ibid).

 According to Lartey, listening to the confidant's story over and over again with an interest to help their healing process and accelerate their feelings towards acceptance of their grievances and unfortunate situations, for example the death and loss of their loved ones (Lartey, 2003). This acceptance in turn helps them to deal with their problems either by themselves or through the help of specialists or professional people.

The church staff members exhibit the kind of care and understanding to carry out pastoral care services. Most of them, if not all, are trained to carry out counselling work in accordance with their profession and duties, and they are ethically bound to exhibit the love of God and his mercy to all mankind.

Every person has a need to be listened to, especially those with a burden or sorrow to bear – these needs are heightened during times of personal stress and social chaos. According to (Clinebell, 1984), pastoral care responds to the need that everyone has for warmth, nurture, support and caring.

Pastoral care seeks to bring healing to those who are suffering from crisis induced dysfunction and brokenness. Those who seek pastoral care may not be members of our congregation; they may be lonely and alienated members of our society whose need for caring is acute. Painfully are the need of those lost within themselves in our churches and congregation. Therefore a congregation ministry of care have responsibilities both in reaching and outreaching mission to needy persons.

One of the key components of pastoral care is listening. Listening is stressed in almost all the literatures about pastoral care (Okkenhaug, 2002; Eide, 2014 and Espedal, 2015).

In this paper, the researcher will be using the work of Berit Okkenhaug, 2002 and Gry Espedal, 2015 in particular, and Emmanuel Y. Lartey, 2003 in general, in addition to

other literatures such as Lynch,2002; Clinebell & McKeever, 2011; Wise, 2013; Patton, 2005 and others that I will review, including the Holy Bible.

Born in 1946, Berit Okkenhaug has substantial experience in her career as a congregational priest, hospital chaplain, and a teacher of pastoral care at the School of Theology in Oslo. She is the author of a number books including "*Når jeg ser ditt anskikt innføring i Kristen sjelesorg"* which is one of the books that the researcher uses as a base for her study.

Gry Espedal is born in 1964. She is a priest and fellow at VID Diakonhjemmet University College. She has vast experiences in pastoral conversations with students. Furthermore, she has experiences as a counsellor and coach. She is the author of several books among which is "*Løsningsfokusert sjelesorg."* The researcher uses this book for grounding the pastoral care theory in this paper.

1.7 Chapter conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher introduced the research topic, and highlighted the research questions that the study is trying to address. Basic clarifications of terms have been introduced and the use of some terms as applied in this study.

Chapter two will be exploring pastoral care theory. The researcher will look at the details of previous research and literatures written on the subject of study. These will be reviewed in relation to the research topics to lay the ground for better theoretical understanding.

Chapter three will be about methodology and methods of data collection. The outlines what methodology is and what methods of data collection are applied; the chapter will look at ethical issues and will touch on validity and reliability of the study.

Chapter four will present the analysis of the data and its interpretation. Chapter five is a discussion chapter, and it will connect the theory to practice and touches on the findings of the study and draws some conclusions of the study and make recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2 Theory

2. Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the research topic and background information on the interest of the researcher in the topic of study: doing pastoral care among young people, a diaconal concern. The chapter shows how this interest was born, and expresses what the researcher wishes to achieve from this study.

This chapter forms part of the task of presenting the theoretical literature related to the research question and the field of study. As such, it comprises samples of the literature review and previews research undertaken in similar field of study; however the literature mentioned here are not the only ones referred to in the main write up of this dissertation. Hence, it has in particular been important to look at sample of papers on workplace studies that have adopted an ethno-methodological approach to their working with investigations of pastoral care practices.

2.1 Defining 'pastoral care'

Defining pastoral care has proved difficult over the years and has been recognised as being problematic both by dint of the terminology that suggests ecclesiastical or agricultural roots and the fact that it is very much a UK-based phenomenon. Best (1995), states that, pastoral care where it has appeared beyond UK shores it is as a result of their colonial inheritance (e.g. Australia) or importation (e.g. Singapore). In line with what Best's point, the use of the term faced an early challenge on the grounds that it represented outdated notions of power, dependence and models of schooling (Best, 1995). Emmanuel Lartey defines pastoral theology, as the "reflection on the caring activities of God and human communities" (Lartey 2006:14).

Pastoral care is concerned with promoting people's personal and social development and fostering positive attitudes: through the quality of counselling and discussion; through the nature of relationships amongst care givers and confidants, through specific pastoral structures and support systems. Accordingly, pastoral care should help confidant to achieve success over the problem and the situation that brings him/her to seek for pastoral care counselling.

Fine defines care as "a complex, contested multi-layered concept that refers not only to actions and activities but also to relationships and attitudes and values about our responsibilities for others and for our own being in the worlds" (Fine 2007 p.4).

In her article "People Ecumenical pastoral care" which appeared in the Norwegian Journal of pastoral care (2007 Årg. 27 no. 3), Marit Bunkholt reflects, among other things on congregation's priests' work with what she calls "conversations", and which the researcher interpret as "counselling". Reading Bunkholt article in comparatives to other pastoral care authors, it gave an impression that, somewhat Bunkholt misses an expanded understanding of the pastoral care concept that takes the multitude of counselling tasks in the priests' professional seriously.

2.2 Who are pastoral care givers?

From the life space perspective, therapeutic relationships are not confined to the formal office-based counselling hours only, but permeate all individual and group interactions in the milieu of the other 23 hours (Trieschman, Whittaker, & Brendtro, 1969). This means that, pastoral care givers are people who are visible in the society. They have neighbours and friends. How are their relations with their neighbours if the neighbours are the ones that need pastoral care? This is the boundaries that are so important in this profession like many other professions.

2.3 Methodical approach in the pastoral care literature

Berit Okkenhaug 2011 and Gry Espedal 2015 books are based on other literature and their own life and long professional experiences. The researcher finds these books very relevant to this study, for the reasons that the authors' experiences happen in Norway. The review of these studies highlights how 'social order'[4] in these pastoral care studies is constituted as that which is produced in, and through, the practical and contingent actions and interactions of confidants in pastoral care settings.

The review also highlights the range of strategies and devices the authors use to achieve 'naturalistic' studies of pastoral care. To build on this review, the chapter narrows the focus on the pastoral care settings to look at the empirical studies that the authors have experienced.

---

[4] See chapter one section 1.1

This chapter also looks at other literature materials that support the thesis of the dissertation. The dissertation is studying pastoral care and its current practice among young people. When defining pastoral care context, it is imperative to establish who carries out the pastoral care services. In Norway pastoral care is a service of the church to the community, it is often carried out by priests and deacons and any other religious employees. The Christians have God as a pivot point in rendering their services to others, they recognise who their neighbours are and to whom they are providing this service. It follows Lynch (2002) who stated that:

> "Pastoral practice is by its very nature an inter-disciplinary activity, and theology, biblical studies, philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, cultural studies, social studies and economic theories all have important roles to play in helping us to think about the assumptions, aims and methods of pastoral practice" (Lynch 2002:1).

For this reason the researcher defines what pastoral care is in terms of its functionality and application to society in general and among the young people in particular.

2.4 Sources of theories

For the purposes of this review, the selections of supportive literature studies have been drawn from journal articles and Christian based books and other literatures. From the reading of several abstracts of articles and relevant periodicals, the selected studies especially that of Okkenhauge, Espedal, Lynch, Lartey, Patton, Thagaard, and others reflect some of the emerging themes and approaches in empirical studies of religion. The aim of these literature reviews is to discuss and compare these studies in terms of the following aspects:

- Orientation to knowledge

- General approaches to methodology and nature of descriptions

- Emerging themes

The intention of all these short reviews in this paper is to eventually produce a map of the research field, to identify the gaps and then plot a path for my own contribution to the field of pastoral care among the young people. The reviews of books, articles and previous researches form a background for argument either for or against the findings of any study and this study is no exception.

2.5 Berit Okkenhaug (2011)

Okkenhaug's book "Når jeg ser ditt ansikt: innføring i kristen sjelesorg" which the researcher literally translates to mean "*when I see your face; an introduction to Christian counselling[5]*" is all about pastoral care in a Christian context. The book's contents and application are directed to pastoral care on a person to person, and human beings to human beings settings. The author's introduction to the book prompts the audience to the fact that relationships are built and developed on the basis of seeing people face to face. Relating this concept of seeing people face to face, it can be said that pastoral care giving is basically seeing those who seek the service as they are. Furthermore, Okkenhaug points out that pastoral care in Norwegian Christian context is not about preaching salvation to those who are seeking pastoral care services. This even though the distinctiveness of pastoral care is that the care giver believes in God as the creator of mankind, the saviour and the one who hold the universe with his holy spirit, (Okkenhaug, 2011).

2.5.1 The relevance of Trinitarian to pastoral care

Okkenhaug further expounds on the importance of a Trinitarian perspective and the distinctiveness of pastoral care giver's theological reflections. The basis of Trinitarian pastoral care is the belief in the triune God. Trinitarian counselling takes the word of God and the human experience seriously. The theological and pastoral reflection is in continuous mutual dialogue, with an aim of bringing people further towards a true relationship with God, good interaction with fellow men and peace and tranquillity with themselves. In the space that occurs in the pastoral care conversation, both confidant and counsellor bring with them their stories and their perception of reality. Okkenhauge points out that these are theological reflections that set pastoral care service apart from other types of care and counselling services (Okkenhaug, 2011).

2.5.2 Interpreting Okkenhauge theory

Relating this theory to the dissertation about pastoral care among the youth and young adults, it can be said that when we meet these groups of people, we must have in mind that the important principle is to see them as they are. Not as people with "problems", but rather as human being going through a situation of hardship. It is the circumstance that is the problem and not the human being who is the problem. Okkenhauge's book is

---

[5] The researchers' own unofficial translation

relevant to this research study, because, doing pastoral care among the youth and young adults entails seeing them as they are, and empowering them to face their grieves and find solutions to their problems.

Reading this book, one can understand the connectivity between seeing our fellow human being as they are and believing in a God who loves us as we are. Okkenhaug points this out by reference to the biblical scripture as follows:

"the Lord bless thee, and keep thee, the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee, the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace" (Numbers 6:24-26 KJV).

Okkenhaug points out that meeting each other face to face, reveals more than just the look on our face, it gives a recognition of who we really are, and what impression we make of those we meet and their impression of us when they see us face to face.

"*Ansikt til ansikt, I møte med hverandre, kan vi oppdage mer av hvem vi selv er, hvem den andre er og hvem Gud er*" In meeting face to face with each other, we can discover more about who we ourselves are, who the other person is and who God is (Okkenhauge 2011:9). This is because when we meet people who are suffering, our reactions changes to that of empathy. We recognise the vulnerability which is not only specific to the confidant, but that can also affect anyone, including the pastoral care giver at one time in their lives.

2.5.3 Pastoral care as part of church service

It is also relevant to define pastoral care as part of a church service, where the community can provide a sense of belonging and meaningful communion with others of like mind. Many people today struggle with various relational problems and a sense of loss is rampart, especially among the young people. We need to listen and learn and give courage and hope in the midst of experience of despair and meaninglessness. When people are struggling with spiritual uncertainty and longing, pastoral care provides excellent opportunities for souls, spirit and mind. Counsellors can meet people where they are and help them to decipher and interpret their lives in the light of God's love, by demonstrating God's love in and with our deeds.

2.5.4 Critical remarks and the use of Okkenhaug in understanding pastoral care among young people

Even though Okkenhauge has written extensively on pastoral care subjects, and her theory is covering many aspects of pastoral care, the book failed to expand on pastoral care among the youth and young adults in particular. When Okkenhaug writes about grief, she relates it to loss of a loved one through death, but she does not focus on other losses which more often occur among young people. The theme of her book therefore seems to concentrate on bereavement grief. Grief among the youth and young adults can also be a result of broken relationship, exclusion from peer groups, lack of friends, etc. Those types of grief have not been expounded on in the book. However the book has shed insightful light on pastoral care in many specific areas, and is substantiated by various real life examples. This makes the book a relevant literature reference to this dissertation. For example, some of the participants talk about the loss of friendship almost in the same way as the loss of a loved one in death. For a youth, when well established friendship is terminated either because the friend find other new friends or interests and hobbies change, this may seriously affect individuals who are involved in it. The book clarifies the grief in similar way and argues that the healing process take time in the youth's incidents, just as much as in the loss of a loved one through death.

2.6 Gry Espedal 2016 Solution focused pastoral counselling

In her book, «Løsningsfokusert sjelesorg», Gry Espedal discusses the change in people's needs and approaches to pastoral care services. According to her, the change is made possible by many factors that are in existence, especially in the Norwegian society. People have other alternative service choices. She mentions other forms of counselling and therapeutic services that are available for people in today's society, (Espedal, 2016).

Espedal points out that pastoral care counselling is not always about providing counselling to those who have lost a loved one. She argues that pastoral care and counselling encompasses conversations about every problem from every walk of life. Pastoral care provides hope and direct clients into the path of finding solutions to their situations, (ibid).

It can be argued that *løsningsfokusert sjelesorg* (solution focused counselling) echoes many other pastoral care givers' points of views. It is not everyone who seeks pastoral

care services, who has problems related to bereavement. In the cases of the youth and young adults, most of the problems that they often find challenging do not have anything to do with bereavement. However they are problems that bring their spirit down, depress them and, confuse and hurt them.

The writer's arguments are supported by Best, (1995); Lynch, (2002); Okkenhaug, (2002); Engedal, (2004); Petersen, (2007) Brendtro and Larson (2012) to mention but few of the schools of thought who have written on the subject of pastoral care and its ability to empower the clients who seek this kind of service.

2.6.1 The role of the church and pastoral care

Pastoral care service in the Norwegian context is a form of counselling that the church offers to the people who ask for it. Espedal argues that the solution-focus approach does not try to understand the problems that the client has, but rather find a way to help the clients to see or realised their strength. She points out that the clients are expert of their own problems, (Espedal, 2016:35). In working with the youth and young adults, it is clear that they understand their own problems, but the reason why they seek help is because they do not know how to solve these problems. The key point here is empowerment. They need help to find their strength.

Discussing the problem with someone else can help create a solution to the problem. Discussing concrete challenges, and only listening to concrete wishes and concrete fears, make the problems only half way solve. The care giver should be able to find key points in the clients own story that can help the client to see where their resilience draws its strength from.

Espedal expound and draws on her vast experience as couch and pastoral care counsellor works. Using this knowledge, she explains that people comes for pastoral care for varied reasons. Espedal experiences that, some confidant come to the pastoral care giver because they just want to find a better way of managing their future situation. They want to find what they can do differently so as to achieve their personal goals. She mentions that others come to find a way of avoiding problems or moving on with their lives. These facts indicate that pastoral care is a counsel with many tales. Having an open mind, well versed knowledge, and substantial confidant and belief in oneself and in God are good characteristics of a pastoral care giver.

2.7 Other related studies and research themes

Carrol A. Wise writes on pastoral care and counselling for pastoral care givers who feel inadequately trained to carry out counselling work. The author raises the issues of expectancy that most congregations have of their pastors and religious leaders. According to Wise, pastoral care allows people to open up their inner conditions of sufferings to their pastors or deacons. The essence of pastoral care is communication and Wise rightly indicates that communication convey experiences in terms of their meanings (Wise, 2013). Meeting people in pastoral care entail recognising confidants who have no problem sharing painful experiences, and those who are almost ashamed to share painful feelings with other people or the pastoral care giver. The recognition trait is a good indicator for the pastoral care giver to allocate adequate time for the individual confidant until they feel confident enough to open up and share their inner feelings (Wise, 2013).

2.7.1 Religious expectancy in pastoral care

According to Wise, religious expectancy is grounded in an understanding of the nature of human life. She points out that the expectancy that religion creates is basically sound, but often misunderstood and misapplied (Wise, 2013). Pastoral counselling is a means of implementing that expectancy. In her opinion, pastoral counselling refers to a priest or deacon who has taken further specialist studies in counselling work. Moreover, pastoral counselling is not about formulating the ultimate truth in any given situation; however pastoral counselling is an attempt to formulate a process through which people can be helped to grow in strength to meet and solve their own problems. In this way pastoral care givers help their clients to achieve a positive understanding or acceptance of their situations and do not look at their circumstances as a form of punishment or "curse" (ibid).

Even though there are people who come to pastoral care because, they want to have the opportunity to look at themselves and their problems in the light of their religion and their God, pastoral care givers do wait for the sign of that insight from the confidant themselves. For these groups of people, faith and belief and healing go hand in hand. For this reason the pastoral care givers can exercise their faith and religion with the client (Wise 2013; Patton 2005).

2.7.2 Pastoral care and theology

John Patton argues that pastoral care and counselling are open to questions, experimentation, modifications and re-adjustments as new facts and deeper insight into various situations are attained. What it means here is that different problems and situational cases help with the formulation of new knowledge. The essence of counselling is communication, and communication is effective when attention and understanding takes place between those who are communicating to each other and with each other, (Patton, 2005).

The central theological conviction or thesis of Patton's book is that God created human beings for relationship with God and with one another. God continues in relationship with his creation by hearing us, remembering us and bringing us into relationship with one another. "Human and community care are possible because of our being held in God's memory; therefore, as members of caring communities we express our caring analogically with the caring of God by also hearing and remembering" (Patton, 2005 p.6).

Pastoral care givers and counsellors must be able to detect and grasp the differences in communication to conceal a bigger problem, and communication to reveal deeper hurts. This type of counselling is similar to qualitative research interview. Communication is the conveying of experience in terms of their meanings. Pastoral care involves communicating painful experiences, suffering, or various emotional pains and deep hurts (Okkenhaug, 2010; Espedal, 2016; Patton, 2005). The care giver is aware of the hurts that can results as an outcome of callous response to what is being communicated.

2.7.3 Aims and objectives of Pastoral care

The ultimate aim of pastoral care is that of ministering to first and foremost members of their congregation as a whole, that is, to increase love between people and between people and God. Its specific functions are healing, sustaining, reconciling, guiding and nurturing congregation members. Although pastoral care has been a feature of the Christian church since the earliest times, a substantial body of theories form around it were not formed before the present century. There has been a tendency towards a theoretical pastoral pragmatism which concentrates on what is functional in particular situations (Best, 2009). This article briefly summarizes some main trends in the recent

history of pastoral care theories. It then goes on to look at some important contemporary developments in this area of pastoral care. Its scope is limited to developments in the English-speaking world, particularly in the USA and the United Kingdom.

2.8 Theoretical framework in this study[6]

In this section of this chapter the researcher looks at literature and other documents that are written about pastoral care specifically in the Norwegian context, and diaconal work in the Norwegian church, (Engedal, 2004, Bunkholt, 2007, Okkenhaug, 2010, Dietrich, Korslien & Nordstokke, 2011, Eide 2014, and Espedal 2016) and pastoral care and diaconal work in the Norwegian society at large. This is because; in her work the researcher also meets with youth and young adults from different faiths than Christianity, who live in the municipality where the research was conducted.

On the wider world stage, review is done on (Lynch, 2002; Lartey 2003; Patton, 2005; Capps, 2012; Miller & Giles 2012; Wise, 2013).

A literature review on the diaconal work and functions in the church of Norway is particular important and relevant to this study. Norway and the Norwegian church do not live in a vacuum. The Norwegian church is a member of the worldwide Lutheran church society, hence looking at pastoral care in wider contextual perspective is imperative. Since the literature review will form the basis of the theories which the qualitative interviews will be informed by, this chapter will be revisited in the discussion and conclusion chapters of this research paper in order to connect the theory to practice.

2.8.1 The diakonia work and pastoral care service in the Norwegian church

The plan is based on the following definition of diakonia:

> "Diakonia is the caring ministry of the Church. It is the Gospel in action and is expressed through loving your neighbour, creating inclusive communities, caring for creation and struggling for justice" (Church of Norway plan for diakonia 2008:5).

Diakonia has a special responsibility to see and identify needy situations in the society and take action where action is needed especially when it is noticed that no one else in

---

[6] This refers to the theoretical framework in this study.

the society cares. Diakonia has a fundamental role to play, especially in respecting the dignity of each and every human being. This is especially vital since we live in a globalised world which is facing various challenges due to cultural and ethnic diversity as has become a fact of life in Norwegian parishes and society. The Church of Norway plan for Diakonia stipulates the concern for suffering people, whether they live in our own municipalities or in far or near countries.

> "Care for creation is a global and a local responsibility. All this is reflected in local plans for diakonia and are summarised as loving one's neighbour, creating inclusive communities, caring for creation and struggling for justice" (Church of Norway plan for diakonia 2008:5).

In our time, deacons have important work to do in the society today just as they did before. This important work includes being present in ordinary peoples' everyday lives. The world of technology and mass media has produced insatiable wishes and desire to be perfect. Better living standard and good health care has contributed not only to life longevity, but also the possibility for plastic surgeries to rectify "perceived" defects in the aspiration of being viewed as beauties or handsome. For youth and young adults, physical appearance takes up a toll on their satisfaction ladder, and acceptance of whom and how they look.

Diakonia has traditionally been strong, and essentially where grief occurs and care for elderly people is concerned. To a lesser extent, diakonia has been a strong provider of youth pastoral care services, hence the need for deacons to devote more time into this important area of work. The church has a job to do in relation to youth and young people. Young people need diaconal advice, and perhaps they also need to be challenged to serve each other and others in the society. Young people need someone who sees them as they are, someone who understands their youthful time zone, and can play the role of a mentor, a guide, and one to fellowship with, not only in words but also in practical everyday life. The societies of today see increased violence, harder social network, more use of drugs, and easier access of illicit substances. An increase of teenage pregnancy and abortions is also seen. Many young people are too often left to themselves to deal with these problems and this makes them vulnerable and easy prey of all media advertisements, (Tjernæs, 2002).

According to Calvert (2009), 'care' is the subject of much debate and it defies a single meaning. It follows, therefore, that if we bring together complex groups of (para)professionals, each with their own language, culture, professional identities and agendas, it is essential to decide what 'pastoral care' might mean, if indeed the term is retained. Brendtro and Larson 2006 quoted Mandela: "Let us build communities and families in which our children and youth, especially those who are most troubled, can belong." (Nelson Mandela, no pagination).

This statement denotes that all professional and individual workers in the communities have a role to play in building up a strong health, and amicable society with focus on family, children and the youth.

The Ecology of Childhood is made up of family, school, peers and community. In doing pastoral care among youth and young adults, one has to bear in mind the fact that pastoral care practice is influenced by the pastoral care giver's values and that careful reflection on the values that shape pastoral care practice is thus important, (Lynch 2002).

2.9 Gordon Lynch 2002

Lynch's book "*Pastoral Care and Counselling*" is about providing a framework for reflection and a way of thinking about pastoral practice that helps pastoral care givers analyse the different ways in which values and ethics in this profession are reflected. The author point out that pastoral practice is an inter-disciplinary activity. Moreover, he points out the fundamental aim of the book, which is "the contribution to an understanding of why ethics and moral reflection are relevant and important to the theory and practice of pastoral care" (Lynch 2002:1). Lynch further argues that all pastoral practices are value-based and that, as such, moral reflection is fundamentally important to the process of thinking about what pastoral practitioners do and what they seek to achieve through their work (ibid).

2.9.1 Values and ethics in pastoral care

Gordon Lynch argues that it is imperative that pastoral care givers learn to think critically about the values that are already influencing their practice and about the different ways in which moral reflection can be relevant to their work (Lynch, 2002). He recognises that human beings are influenced by the values that they grow up in, and

those that are implanted in them by the societies that they live in, and others that are acquired by way of associations. Therefore, in his book he argues that all pastoral practice is influenced by the pastoral care giver's values, hence a careful reflection on the values that shape pastoral practice is thus imperative (ibid). Connecting this to the research topic, when working with the youth and young adults, it is imperative to be able to identify and think through the key issues that clients raise and be on guard of one's own influence on the case or situation, and to make appropriate, un-biased suggestions.

To explain the dilemma faced by Christian pastoral care givers, Lynch gives several real life examples. One of the examples given is a situation of a homophile couple. The Christian pastoral care giver faces a dilemma between what he can advise the couple, and what his faith in God and bible knowledge says about the relationship between people of same sex (Lynch, 2002). The example is relevant now that the church of Norway has adopted church marriage of same sex. There may be pastoral care givers who may find the counselling for this group of care seekers posing challenge to their own faith and belief.

2.9.2 Moral development

Moral reflection on pastoral care practice needs to involve considerations of what social or institutional factors are, for example exploration of the relationship between domestic violence and the wider patriarchal concepts, including assumptions within society do impede clients from exercising courage to seek for help for their situation or problems. However "positive youth development is optimized when children are wrapped in a supportive network of relationships"(Lynch, 2002:2).

Hitching on relationship boundaries between care giver and care recipient, Lynch argues further that

> "appropriate boundaries are important to protect those who seek pastoral care and that the notion of the therapeutic frame can at least begin to help us to ask questions about what kind of boundaries are important for pastoral relationships" (Lynch, 2002:10).

2.10 Pastoral care and mental health

According to the Scottish Executive journal, good mental health is important for a stable and thriving society; it is important for learning and for sound academic

achievements. This applies to pastoral care and services if carried out early when challenges of life have not developed into psychics' ailment. Most importantly, good mental health is vital for all people especially children and young adults so that they can achieve their potential in their lives (Scottish Executive 2004, p. 4).

Going further in theories, one can mention social identity theory. According to Lynch, theory has an important role to play in assisting such reflection, and the framework for thinking about pastoral practice (Lynch, 2002), Therefore, in doing so, some of these theories are influenced by a number of different ideas. The reason for bringing this issue into a pastoral care context is because religious and Christian practices do not happen in a vacuum. Social identity theory is defined in terms of a person's knowledge and recognition of where she/he belongs, (Hogg & Abrams, 1988). This belonging could be to a set of individuals, religion, and the intellectual associations persons strongly categorises themselves with. According to Stets and Burke, the consequence of self-categorisation is an accentuation of perceived similarities between the self and other in-group members (Stets and Burke 2000, v3 p.225). This statement encompasses all the attitudes, beliefs and values affective reactions, behavioural norms and other properties that are believed to correlate with the relevant intergroup categorisation.

What makes pastoral care stands out of the other types of care is what Lartey calls:

> "Counselling for the whole person, as an individual as well as part of a family and social unit, and as a whole person, body, mind and spirit, but with particular reference to the person's psychological, ethical and theological frames of reference", (Lartey, 2003:106).

This is the strength that pastoral care has and must utilise.

2.11 Conclusion of chapter

In writing about pastoral care among the youth and young adults, Espedal, (2015) argues that too much research has been concentrated on pastoral care for the adults and elderly people. Ironically, when it comes to the youth and young adults, nearly most empirical studies have addressed issues that mainly concern the loss of a loved one (grief) – and related pastoral care. The current research aims at addressing this gap through an empirical study of a group of youth and young adults in the municipality

where the research has been conducted. The answers, views and opinions of participants will be analysed through the lens provided by the conceptual framework outline above.

Furthermore, discussion about how pastoral practitioners can appropriately make their own values explicitly in pastoral conversation, and identify and respond to moral dilemmas is not simply a process of conscious and rational reflection. It is a process influenced by the stakeholders' moral character and the particular virtues that they have developed in the course of life training and practice in the field of work. As Lynch put it:

> "Moral reflection in relation to pastoral practice thus goes beyond thinking about particular moral dilemmas' to raising wider questions about what kind of moral character we should aspire to and what resources help us to develop that character" (Lynch 2002 e-book no pagination).

The purpose of the literature review is to build the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study. Moreover, the knowledge gained through the literature review will serve as the «glasses» which the researcher will use when analysing and discussing the data collected, and suggesting conclusions of the findings.

Finally, the review of different available literature shows that there are a lot of books and research articles written on pastoral care and counselling people who have lost a loved one, or about people who are facing terminal illnesses. Furthermore, there are extensive literature in all the methods and technics of pastoral care and counselling However, less is written specifically on pastoral care work among children, the youth and young adults. This is apparent among the Norwegian authors who expound extensively on elderly pastoral care.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3. Introduction

The previous chapter looked at some of the literature that is written about pastoral care in order to find the grounding theory for this study. This chapter looks at the methodology and methods that are applied in this study. The research approach, sampling procedure, the data collection methods, the methodological limitation[7] and the ethical issues are critically described. Furthermore, the researcher explains and justifies the choice of the method use in data collection.

The first part of the chapter defines the methodology terms, and look at reasons for the researcher's chose the methods that are applied in the study. The second part of the chapter presents the empirical data as collected from the participants in this study. Furthermore, a summary of follow up statements are presented from pastoral care givers in the municipality as part of substantiating the findings.

3.1 Methodology

The term 'methodology' refers to the choices we make about appropriate models, cases to study, methods of data gathering, forms of data analysis etc., when planning and executing a research study (Silverman 2006 p.402). In other words this means the way in which we approach research problems. Methodology is the technics that are applied scientifically and systematically to solve a research problem. In social sciences, the term applied to how the research is conducted. Our assumptions, interests, and purposes shape which methodology we choose. According to Taylor et al., debates over methodology are debates over assumptions and the purposes of the theory and perspective that one needs to apply in research, (Taylor et.al. 2016). In this paper, methodology therefore, refers to how qualitative descriptive data was collected. Qualitative data involves people's own accounts; it includes their verbatim words, and contains records of people's behaviours (ibid), hence it is important to reflect on the methods used in light of epistemological assumptions.

---

[7] The choices about appropriate models, cases to study, methods of data gathering, forms of data analysis etc., in planning and executing a research study.

By methods of data collection means the specific research techniques, which include qualitative methods techniques, and in this paper this is interviewing participants and audio recording their answers for later transcription.

3.1 Research approach

The dissertation is based on empirical data, and aims at finding answers to the research question formulated in sub-section 1.4.

According to Johannessen, Tufte and Christoffersen, "critical ethnography and narrative inquiry use a social critical lens by design and purpose to analyse patterns of behaviour within a culture" (Johannessen, Tufte and Christoffersen 2010, p.84). In framing this study, thoughts were given to how the youth and young adults could make use of pastoral care in their daily lives. The rejection of the idea of an objective method and a strong commitment to the idea of interpretation in social life mean that a significant part of the work of building accounts must involve a detailed consideration of the practices of accounts construction, (Silverman, 2006). Account construction in this paper was done through interview. A semi-structure, in-depth interview was conducted among 15 participants, whose age ranges from 16 to 23. Their accounts and understanding of pastoral care service make up the writings of this paper.

The relationship between the researcher and the participants; the rationales behind the explanations given by the research participants; the intrusiveness of the methods being used (e.g. the extent to which the choice of methods itself may change the things being studied); the extent to which the participants understand what was being presented to them; the appropriateness of academic language used for explaining other forms of life; the processes of inference from data – all of these areas and many others were of the utmost concern to the researcher because they all impact on the researchers' own account construction practices, (ibid). Therefore since the study focuses on participants aged 16 to 23 and who fit in the scope of youth and young adults, it was imperative that the researcher designed appropriate questions and mode of administering them to the participants.

Brown and Dowling state that "whichever approach is adopted, it is vital to carry out a pilot study with a sample which matches the profile of the sample for the main study" (Brown and Dowling 1998, p.67).

For this reason, the researcher approached a convenience pilot sample of five young people whom she is very familiar with. Two of the youth are very active members of the churches in the municipality, whiles the other three where youth of different faith. The criteria that informed the pilot sample were the fact that these five youth's ages range from 16 – 20. Their age group is similar to the age range of the target group in the study. Apart from this, the pilot group was also conveniently available for discussion and initial support in the research. They were all interviewed in order for the researcher to re-define the main interview schedule and to prepare the language and structure of the interviews to be clearly understood by other young people. The answers given by the pilot group are not included in the data analysis of the study, nor their general opinions on the research topic and related questions.

According to Brown and Dowling,

> "...having a pilot study proved to be a prerequisite to produce an instrument for measuring the opinions and provide orientations which has face validity and internally consistent and reliable" (Brown and Dowling 1998, p.71).

The pilot interviews prepared the researcher to revise the format of the interview questions. For example, instead of using choices from statements (which, based on the pilot interviews, the researcher thought were leading), the question was changed to a simple open ended question of which an example is: In your opinion, are the church staff members readily available enough to you if you needed someone to talk to about any issues?

Furthermore, since this paper is about pastoral care among the youth and young adults, it was also imperative that the researcher interviewed colleagues who carry out pastoral care on almost daily basis. The pastoral care service that the priests are engaged in on daily basis are pastoral (sjelesørg) care mostly related to bereavements, and not necessarily to general problems like abuse of different kinds, bullying, exclusion and or youth and young adults' challenges about knowing how to navigate problems related to adulthood life.

Three of the priests were conveniently contacted to take part in the study, two of them agreed and one abstained. The researcher wants to stress here that, even though the priests were ask to participate in this study, they are not the target group in this study. Their inclusion was mainly for the purposes of better understanding of the functionality

of pastoral care as a service organ of the church. Therefore the detailed description of uniformity interviews, venue, and time, applies only to the young people who are the target group in this study.

The interviews for the priests took place in the researcher's own office. The priests are based in the same municipality as the young people in this study. Initially the researcher did not plan to interview the priests; however, after she had finished the interviews with the target participants – the young people, she became more curious to hear about what the priests' opinions on pastoral care among the young people are. The priests were not part of the pilot study, but their answers are included in the findings of this study, because somehow their answers showed important aspects for the study.

3.2 Research design

The study uses a case study approach. While the debates related to this approach are still raging; for example (Brown and Dowling 1998), do not even agree that it is a separate approach; the advantages of the approach are many. According to Sturman, (1994 in Bassey, 1999)

> "The distinguishing feature of a case study is the belief that human systems develop a characteristic wholeness or integrity and are not simply a loose collection of traits. As a consequence of this belief, case study researchers hold that to understand a case, to explain why things happen as they do, and to generalize or predict from a single example requires an in-depth investigation of the interdependencies of parts and of the patterns that emerge" (Bassey, 1999, p.26).

Yin, on the other hand, argues that what is crucial to case study research is that it involves enquiry in a real-life context while recognizing that the phenomenon being studied may not be separable from the context: "… an empirical enquiry that investigates contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 1994, p.13).

According to Adelman et al 1980, in Cohen et al, 2008), the approach is high in authenticity and reality, while (Yin, 2003) notes that it is most ideal when the phenomenon under study is not easily separated from its context. Indeed the appeal of the case study is rooted in its contextual grounding. Employing Case Study method in a research is vital when researching a particular place, community or a specific situation. It is notable to say that case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why'

questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context (ibid).

An intricate situation like pastoral care is not only politically connected, but also socially, culturally and historically connected to the environment. With specific reference to the proposed research, the case study approach would allow for the required depth, given the integrative and participatory methodology to be used, as well as the complex contextualisation of the phenomenon of pastoral care of these groups. The high level of awareness and reflection required of the participants demand that focus remains on a small and committed group.

A case study approach can achieve rich description- depth versus coverage in order to represent the meanings and perspectives that individual social actors or groups produce within the contexts. At the same time, the nature of the research question is such that breadth in terms of enlarged numbers of participants would not add insight of the sort required. It would not be appropriate to call this ethnography as the interest is not in the municipality or a town per se, but in the phenomenon of motivation to pastoral seek care.

Furthermore, the case study approach is often applied to the study of a phenomenon when it is important for the researcher to study people's interactions, actions, and engagement in a process (Creswell, 1998). Case study assumes that the context is important for understanding a phenomenon, in this case the young people's perspective on pastoral care.

3.3 Methods of Data Collection

Data collection was conducted through semi structured interview done with 15 participants whose age ranges from 16 to 23. By semi structured interview is meant that the interviewer prepares a list of questions, but these were asked in a flexible order and with a wording that is contextually appropriate. The aim of semi structured interview is to ask all the questions on the list with sensitivity to develop a conversational structure, but not necessarily asking the questions in any particular order. The researcher is more interested in the interviewee's point of view, (Bryman, 2004). Semi structured interview allows the researcher to prompt the participant to expand their answers and clarify their

opinions on specific questions since the interview only "produces a particular representation or account of an individual's views or opinions" (Silverman 2006).

The themes that the researcher wished to examine closely in the study were:

- Pastoral care as a service available to all, especially the youth and young adults in the municipality.
- Participants' understanding of the duties and responsibilities of diakonia in the society (this was necessary because pastoral care to a layman's understanding, means "counselling service rendered by the priests. If the participants are aware of some of the duties of the deacons, then their perspectives and anticipation of a deacon rendering pastoral care service is not miss-understood).
- How the participants look at and understand pastoral care services in comparison to other similar services available to them.
- Possibilities to improve the availability of pastoral care to the youth and young adults in our society.

While the boundaries of response are left open for interviewees, semi structured interviews provide at least some level of standardization in the questions. This can make a comparison between different interviews a little more straightforward than in other freer interview styles, and facilitates the modes of analysis, including the ability to compare interview transcripts across key themes (Johannessen, Tufte and Christoffersen, 2010).

Furthermore, in semi structured approaches, interviewers are free to probe interviewees by asking them to elaborate on their comments, or to provide examples.

Therefore, semi-structured interviews are applied in this study for the reasons that it is the most common form of data collection in many forms of social research. They are comparatively convenient (compared to large-scale observational research, or surveys), easier to develop than comprehensive questionnaires, and a good way of generating rich data on people's opinions and experiences, which are often at the heart of social research, (Miles & Huberman 1994; Stark and Torrance 2005).

That being said; there are important methodological debates underlying interview research which arise from the intersection of interpretivist commitments to empirical

sites of research. In the above discussion, the researcher looked at some of the more prominent aspects of these debates, and some of the key design decisions that researchers face when working through them.

3.4 Procedure for choosing participants

Invitation to participate in the project was sent to 30 youth and young adults whose age ranged from 16 to 23. Twenty five of these consented to take part in the study. Due to time constraint, the researcher decided to only interview 15 participants, plus two priests who were conveniently chosen because of their relevancy to the study. The priests had different questions[8] from that of the young people and they were the last to be interviewed.

The15 young people were randomly picked. After receiving responses from those who wanted to take part in the project, the researcher wrote their names and codes that responded to their names. The codes were then re-written on another paper. The researcher cut out each code from the paper, and placed each code on a bowl. With the help of a friend, the researcher was able to pick 15 codes randomly from the bowl above the head of the friend.

3.4.1 Qualitative data collection

Methods of collecting the data is through open ended questions, face to face interview. Individual face to face interviews were conducted in English. The venue for the interviews was the same for all the participants. The procedure of asking questions and recording the answers was the same for all the participants. It was anticipated that the interview would take 25 minutes for each participants; however some participants used more than 25 minutes. It can thus be said that on average, it took between 25 to 30 minutes to conduct one interview for each participant.

Even though the questions were open-ended questions, a semi-structured method of interview was used in conducting the interview for the study. Semi-structured interview allows specific topics to be covered through what is often referred to as an interview guide. Interview guide leaves the interviewee a great deal of leeway to adapt questions and responses to emerging situations or themes (Bryman, 2004).

---

[8] See Appendix B interview guide section 4 follow up questions to the priests.

All the participants were informed in writing about the procedures including the use of tape recording during the interview. Participants were asked to indicate in the form if they did not want to be tape-recorded. However, all the participants agreed to be tape recorded throughout the interview. Furthermore, the participants were also informed that they could withdraw from the study if they wish at any time without that decision affecting them in any way. Again, no participant withdrew from the study.

The study was about pastoral care among the youth and young adults, and it was a general study about what the youth bring to the table when they encounter some difficulties and problems that cause them grief, or confuses them that they decide to seek for help. It may be a challenge for the youth to seek help from the church especially if Christianity is not often spoken at home.

The hypothesis was that the youth and young adults would seek for help from the church if they feel connected to the church more than when they are not connected to the church.

The following table shows the information of the participants. Attention is given to their age, gender and their religious demography as at the time of interviews.

The two priests, who took part in the study, are not included in this table, their interview was more for the purposes that were mentioned on the above paragraphs, and even though their opinions make up part of the conclusion of the study, the weight is put on the opinions of the young people in this study. This is because the youth and young adults were the participant whose opinions were under study.

Table 1.

No. of participants	Males	Females	Age	Religion
P01[9]	M		18-19	Christian
P19		F	16-17	Christian
P30	M		20-21	Christian
P04	M		20-21	Buddhist
P17		F	18-19	Muslim
P20	M		16-17	Christian
P28	M		22-23	Muslim
P08	M		16-17	Christian
P09		F	18-19	Christian
P10	M		18-19	Christian
P06		F	18-19	Buddhist
P12		F	22-23	Christian
P13		F	16-17	Muslim
P22		F	16-17	Christian
P15		F	16-17	Christian
Total	7	8	15	15

Table 1: Table showing participants' codes, gender, present age range, and religion. There were seven males and eight females. Two of the participants' ages range from 22-23, two were 20-21; five were 18-19 and six were 16-17. There are two Buddhist, three Muslims, and ten Christians.

3.5 Sample and Sampling Strategy

Participants' sample in the study comprised a total of fifteen youth and young adults from different cultural and religious backgrounds. Among these were seven males and eight females, three Muslims, two Buddhist, and ten Christians. It was necessary to make certain negotiations on the choice of participants before the data collection begun. This means that, the researcher sent invitations to 30 young people to volunteers to participate in the study, it was decided to interview only half of that number due to time constraint and the laborious involved in the transcription of data from the interviews.

The 30 volunteers were informed about the final selection procedure, for which probability sampling was applied. However it was only 25 volunteers who replied and who agreed to participate in the study.

---

[9] The codes in the table are written in order of how they were picked out from the bowl.

Probability samples always require a sampling frame. Generating such a frame can be time consuming and expensive, but it is a necessary requirement to find a representative sample of participants who meet the stipulated criteria. For this study that is the sample group of 15 young people being from 16 to 23 years old, randomly chosen from the 25 volunteers. Random selection is done by given number codes to the participants, these code numbers are then written on separate pieces of paper, and are drawn out of a bowl. Even though the participants sample is small, the researcher still felt obligated to give a fair chance to all those who volunteered to take part in the study through random selection. All the volunteers met the criteria that the researcher was targeting – ages 16 to 23, and she needed 15 people for the study out of the number of participants that signed up. Explanation was also given on the onset that there was going to be a random selection and a thank you note for their willingness to take part in the study note was sent to all the volunteers.

In addition to these 15 participants, the researcher conveniently approached three priests who live in the same municipality and asked them if they can take part in the study because she wanted to have their opinions on pastoral care as well. Two of the priests took part one did not participate.

The sampling of participants is qualitative, in the sense that the aim was not to make generalization about all the youth and young adults in Norway or in the municipality where the research is conducted. The aim is to view the phenomenon of pastoral care through the eyes of a selected number of participants living in the municipality. Flyvbjerg, tells us that even though a case study may not be generalizable, it adds to the store of accumulated knowledge and to this extent, what is needed are participants who are committed to the level of participation and reflection necessary (Flyvbjerg, 2006). There is a significant demand made on their time, the researcher must build trust and rapport, which is another reason why a small sample of participants is justified. It was for this reason that the sample consisted of participants whose age range is the same as those youth that the researcher had worked with and built a relationship with and whose ages are 16-23 years old.

3.5.1 Interview procedure

Participants were issued a consent form to fill in and sign. The consent form had the title of the dissertation, an introduction message of who the researcher is, and what the

research is about, and most importantly there was a paragraph that informed them of their right to withdraw from the project if they felt like they did not want to take part anymore, without their decision affecting them in any way[10].

After signing the consent form participants were then slotted a time schedule for the interview. All participants agreed to be voice recorded. Interviews were done face to face, and the researcher also took handwritten notes.

An interview has a two urges sword, by this is meant that both the one interviewing and the one being interviewed have effect on each other. In this study, the researcher experienced that she was affected by the participants during the interview, and likewise, the participants were affected by some of the questions.

3.5.2 The effect of the interview process on participants

Some of the questions triggered some hidden feelings which were not pleasant. It was obvious that some of the interview questions shook some of the participants' memories of unpleasant situations they had experienced in the past. The mere remembrance of the situation and the thoughts of vulnerability caused some of the participants overwhelming grief.

The young people were affected by the interview especially on the question of whether they have experienced acts of bullying, exclusion or subject to constant mean words. This question was answered with emotion, and this is where the interview process spent much time because the researcher had to give room for the participants to deal with their emotions. The researcher had to be careful about the continuation of the interviews where participants showed an overwhelmed sense of grief at the recall of the incidents of being bullied, excluded or subjection to mean words. In some cases the researcher asked the participants if they would wish to stop the interview. None of the participants withdrew from the process. One gave the answers to the suggestion in this way:

> "No, I actually think this is good because I have never told or shared these with anybody else. I have been carrying these sad memories with me, and sometimes they make me feel sad when something small happen between me and now present friends. The fear of the situation re-occurring does haunt me still." (16-17 years old)

---

[10] This procedure is further explained in detail in the Ethics section of this paper, due to the importance of ethical considerations rules and guidelines.

This was the worse feeling especially when the aggressor had been one of the parents, someone who is supposed to protect and nurture their offspring. In these instances, the interviews turned into a semi-counselling, before one could continue with the normal and ordinary flow of questions and answers. In other instances and due to the gravity of the situations, the researcher asked the participants if they would like to come back and talk about their situation. Two of the participants wished to come back for a pastoral care session. It shows that there are probably more young people in today's society who have problems than we can imagine.

Different people have different ways of reacting to an interview, and researchers ought to be aware of these aspects before they go in for interviews, and to be prepared for whatever manifestation of the effects of the interview on their confidants.

The interviews open windows into another person's life. Through giving answers to the interview questions participants opened their hearts, revealed their inner feelings, and spoke about their life experiences, and their hopes for the world in which they live. In spite of bringing in hurting situations into the interview process, most participants said that they found the session good for their own wellbeing.

Holding face to face interviews entail empathic listening on the researcher's part. Empathic listening is active listening, and this demand a lot of emotional investment on the person who is being interviewed. This form of listening demands also a relative openness to the interviewer's own feelings in the matter that is being discussed.

3.6 Ethical consideration

Every research faces ethical dilemma, and this study is not an exception. However great consideration is given to the fact that the researcher will be dealing with human being, and there will be interpersonal interaction with the participants. This study complies with the guidelines set out by (The National Committees for Research Ethics in Norway, 2006). Research ethics in Norway are regulated by the Act relating to ethics and integrity in research. In general research ethics draws heavily on the recommendations provided by some of the authors such as (Thagaard, T. 2013; Silverman, 2005; Cohen, et al. 2007; and Bryman, 2008). These schools of thought and

their description of the ethical procedures are adhered to throughout the research process and in the methodology chosen to conduct this research study.

This further, means that each and every participant in this study received a letter of consent. This letter informed the participants about their rights throughout their participation in the research and asked for their written consent to take part in the study. The letter of consent stipulated the researcher's commitment to keep the participants' identity anonymous. Moreover, the participants were assured of confidentiality, anonymity, non identifiability and non-traceability of the information and answers that they provide.

Furthermore, it was made clear that the answers provided are purely for the purpose of this project. The researcher guaranteed in writing that any participant can withdraw from the study anytime if they felt like doing so for reasons known to them. Since the participants in this research were young people of 16-23 years of age, it was very important that they understood what the research was about. For this reason, a copy of the English questions was translated to Norwegian. The translated version of the questions was given to each participant during the interview for clarity purposes. The questions were collected back at the end of the interview session.

The outline of this research study was reported to and registered with the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste = NSD) and permission to proceed was received prior to the interviews.

3.7 Delimitation

In carrying out this study, the researcher initially faced challenges in finding research participants. The initial time spent looking for participants took long. Therefore, the researcher decided to interview only 15 participants. This is also because of anticipated time constraints with conducting the interviews and the amount of work involve in transcribing and writing detailed transcripts of data notes from the interviews. This was accelerated further by two additional constraints which are: the language factor and the place to hold the interview factor.

3.7.1 Time constraint factor

The researcher anticipated a large sample of participant for the study. However, due to the time limit and the process involved in getting green light from NSD to start the study, added to the delimitation of the research. Furthermore, responses from the invited participants also were not forthcoming fast enough. Therefore, there were inconsistencies within the empirical domain between what might be referred to as the planned setting and the achieved setting. For example, the researcher's intention was to carry out the interview on children of the age group from twelve to seventeen. However, the process of obtaining the consent from parents and perhaps from schools, and NSD was considered very slow or not forthcoming. Therefore the researcher decided to change the sample group of participants to the age group from 16 to 23 years old as this age groups by law can give their own consent to take part in a study like this one.

Taylor et al. advise qualitative researchers to view things as though they were happening for the first time by setting aside their preconceptions and presuppositions of what they already know about the society and social functions in order to discover it with the clarity of vision (Taylor et al 2016).

3.7.2 The language factor

When the researcher first sent out invitation letters asking the youth and young adult to participate in the study, most of them declined, because the letter of invitation letter was written in English. Their reason for declining was that they were "not good enough/fluent in English." When the researcher realised that this was going to be a problem, the invitation letter was translated into Norwegian. As soon as the researcher sent out the new letter, she received 25 positive responses out of 30 invitations that were sent. The interviews were conducted in English; however, the participants were encouraged to express themselves in both English and Norwegian where they lacked a word or expression in English. The researcher tried and made sure that what was transcribed was the true representative of what was said in the interview, by cross-checking again and again with the participants.

3.7.3 Place to hold the interview factor

Due to the fact that the research title of the study is pastoral care, the researcher did not know if she could hold the interview in a school or in the public library. It was clear that

she could not carry out the interview in the church office because some of the participants were not Christians and the church office workers know most of the Christian participants. Therefore, holding the interview in the church office would not give a neutral ground or unanimity to the participants. The researcher therefore decided to find a place in a University College library in a nearby municipality where a room was assigned in the university college's library, where the interviews were conducted. Participant gave their time schedules to the researcher indicating the time that they were available and could take part in the interview. The researcher then constructed a time table out of the individual times that each participant gave. The maximum number of participant interviewed per day was two.

Furthermore, each participant proposed a convenient time for them to meet with the researcher during the opening hours of the library. This also proved to be a challenge in terms of both finding a good time and an appropriate space. As a result, there was no uniformity of place and time throughout the interview scheduled time. These delimitations may have had effect on the interview protocol, and on the participants' mental state (concentration or disruption).

3.8 Clarifying the question guide

Participants who are more fluent in English language were able to answer all the questions in English, whiles those who were not fluent in English were allowed to answer the questions in Norwegian.

Bearing the language difficulty in mind the interview session started on general terms and general subjects in order for the researcher to build rapport with participants and to lessen the feelings of incompetent in the language. Furthermore, since the interview was conducted in English, the participants who were not so fluent in English had a printed copy of the same questions translated to Norwegian. However, they were given a plain paper which they were asked to cover the rest of the questions with, except for the question that they were answering at a time. These participants were also allowed to answer the questions in Norwegian. The Norwegian copy of the questions was collected back from the participant at the end of each interview session.

For tape-recording, the researcher used Sony Mono digital voice recorder. Tape recording was important in this interview due to the time constraint. The interview time could have been longer if it was not for the use of tape recording.

The questions were divided into four themes: demography; pastoral, social and other care giving organs in the society; crisis and grief; and from pastoral care givers point of view. Most of the participants answered questions with long narrative answers with very little probing (Brow and Dowling, 1998). Participants show enthusiasm in answering the questions.

During the interview, the participants were sometimes asked to clarify certain statements that they made. Some were probed further to give explain and clarify some of the answers they provided, and some were asked to expand their answers further as to why they made certain statements. It was important to have the exact clarity of the statements made, for the purpose of transcription.

At the end of each interview, the participants were told about some of the duties of the deacon in the Norwegian church and each participant was given the printed definition of who is the deacon in the church and society according to the plan for diakoni definition of 1989.

The findings of the study are based on the researcher's understanding and interpretation of the data provided through the 15 interviews.

3.9 Data analysis

Empirical data analysis began during the data collection by, *inter alia* observing the behaviour and body language of the participants when they met with the researcher for the interview. It was therefore important for the researcher to make the participants feel at ease and to relax by not starting the interview right away. The researcher established a mutual rapport with the participants for the first two to three minutes of the interview. After that she gave the participant the consent letter, a copy of which she read aloud to the participant, and asked if they understood everything that was written in the letter. She also asked the participant if they have any other question/s concerning the interview or the study.

The interview data was collected using Narrative approach. Narrative Analysis make a distinction between descriptions of events and the events themselves; therefore the approach examines the account given as essential for giving the understanding of the event that the interviewees are referring to. The general ideas behind all approaches to narrative analysis are that the narrative, through which people produce accounts either of themselves, their lives or their actions are important for understanding social life itself. Brown and Dowling fully support such attitude:

> "The prime concern of the interviewer might be to explore the world from the perspective of the interviewee and to construct an understanding of how the interviewee makes sense of their experiences. In this case the use of standard questions, and fixed format would be unduly constraining" (Brown and Dowling, 1998, p.73).

What this means is that participants are free to tell about the case as they understand it, and to put meanings to it as it applies to their understanding. The researcher groups these meanings as they are narrated by the participants, put them into themes according to their similarities. This concept is explained better by Fontana and Frey who recognise the importance of the use of specific terms, especially "in the creation of a sharedness of meanings in which both the interviewer and the respondent understand the contextual nature of specific referents" (Fontana and Frey, 2003, p.86).

During the transcription of the data, there was a need to contact some of the participants again after the formal interview was over. The researcher sought further clarification especially after listening to, and in the course of transcription of the interview record. For example, some statements were muffled or unclear on the tape. In those instances, the researcher went back to the participant and let the participant listen to the unclear part of the recorded conversation, after which the participant explained what she/he said and the explanation was again noted down on paper.

3.9.1 Reliability and validity

Validity and reliability are essentially tools of the positivist epistemology school of thought. This group of theorists believe in the view that knowledge is a key goal of the scientific approach and that it can only be created through controlled study and the management of proven facts. Joppe defines reliability as:

> "the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable" (Joppe 2000, p.1).

This definition is echoed by Thagaard (2013, p.202), where she stresses the replicability of a study – the question of whether or not some future researcher could repeat the research project and come up with the same results, interpretations and claims.

Marion Joppe defines validity thus:

> "Validity determines whether the research truly measure that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are… Researchers generally determine validity by asking a series of questions and will often look for the answers in the research of others" (Joppe 2000, p.1).

It is important that the validity and reliability of the data provided is of high quality in order to infer the study findings. However, due to the sample size in this study it is difficult to determine reliability of the study in general terms. The study is valid for those who took part in it, and it may represent a section of the young people within the age range, maybe also below that age range. However, it is unrealistic to assume that the findings of the study can be inferred to the general youth and young adults at large. The researcher views the finding as a case study that is specific to the municipality where the research has been conducted and in particular to those participants who took part in the study.

This is in line with (Taylor et. el. 2016) who advise qualitative researchers to view things as though they were happening for the first time by setting aside their preconceptions and presuppositions of what they already know about the society and social functions in order to discover it with the clarity of vision.

3.9.2 Conclusion of chapter

This chapter discusses the methodology and methods that are applied how the data was collected. Emphasis was put on the importance of uniformity of the instruments use in collecting the data for example the place where the interviews were held, the time as to how long each interview lasted and the method of recording the data. The chapter also discusses and points out the challenges that the researcher faced in carrying out the study. It points out the ethical issues that were followed in carrying out the study as well as highlighted the limitation of the study.

The next chapter will concentrate on the data analysis and interpretation. The transcription of the data was done on verbatim form. The statements that echo many participants' opinions are presented in the writing up text. So are some of the statements that expressed strong opinion on a theme. The discussion chapter shall discuss the finding of the study, including a conclusion reached based on the study findings.

Chapter 4 Data analysis & Interpretation

4. Introduction

The previous chapter discussed how the data was collect, and expounded on the measures that were taken into consideration for the uniformity and neutrality of the interview venue. This chapter will concentrate on analysing and interpreting the data from the transcription of the interviews.

Data collected was analysed using qualitative methods of analysis. It was hoped that the data collected would give a realistic and deep understanding of the situation of how to carry out an effective pastoral care service among the target group of people. Moreover, to point out possible ways to make pastoral care services more readily available to them. Therefore, the interview data was analysed using thematic analysis. A list of initial categories was developed and refined by reading and categorizing the data in each transcript and in turns develops codes through comparing each transcript with another. The qualitative research design permits the researcher to get close to the data, to know the individuals involved and observe and record what they do and say. Denzin and Lincoln hold that qualitative research involves studying 'things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them' (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994, p.2). This is what the researcher's investigation hoped to do in this research.

The interview guide was divided into four themes. These will be discussed according to the sequence of the questions and answers given by participants as described in the following sections. The list of research guide questions is attached to this document in the appendix section of the paper.

4.1 Background information

This part of the interview process was a warm-up exercise in an effort to establish rapport with the participants and somehow to learn to know them a little bit. Sharing background information about the study as well as about the participants themselves was important. It allowed the researcher to know the kind of faith the participants has or belong to and if they are active in their religion. Moreover, the background information session informed the researcher of how much the religion means to each of the

participants, thereby allowing her to better understand whether their religious faith might affect their likelihood of seeking help from the priests and or the deacons in the Norwegian church.

To the question about how significant the church or their place of worship is to them, the Buddhist participant said they have a temple at home and the parents pray every day, and sometimes the parents insist that all the family members should take part in the prayers. The Muslims informed that they pray according to the number of times that they are supposed to pray in a day. They do not need to go to a mosque, but if there had been one the municipality where they now live they would go to the mosque. For the Christians the answer was a yes, but most of them indicate that they do not pray so often. However, they all seem to value their religion as an important part of their Norwegian culture and tradition.

To their opinion about what pastoral care is, fourteen out of fifteen participants, defined pastoral care literally as the care or consultations given by the priests in the church. They also indicated that they did not know that pastoral care is available to everyone who is facing some problems and have a need to talk to someone about that. They knew, though, that the pastoral care service is readily available to everyone who has lost a loved one through death or has a family member with terminal illness and to old people. Otherwise, the youth and young adults have limited knowledge about the availability of the care givers from the church whenever or for whatever reason they need someone to talk to outside their own families.

Out of fifteen participants, only three participants had used pastoral care services and these participants had found the service to be very good in terms of professional listening. One of the participants put it this way:

> "It was so good to just be allowed to speak and no one is taking notes" or "looking at the clock".

4.2 Pastoral, social and other care giving organs in the society

There are various institutions in the municipality that render counselling services and other types of care services to the youth and children, but these services are not "free" per se. By "free" is not meant money, but the struggle to get access through a referral process and then put on a waiting list.

The participants were aware of the different organs in the municipality that could be contacted if they were in need of help or someone to talk to. However, eleven out of the fifteen participants did not know that pastoral care is also a care service available from the church side, also for people who are not members of the Norwegian church. The none-Christian participants also did not know that one does not necessarily have to talk about God and salvation with a pastoral care giver. Only if the confidant brings up the religious discussion in the course of the pastoral care interaction would the pastoral care giver answer questions in accordance with to their own faith. All of the Christian participants knew that pastoral care is involved in bereavement and follow up to those who have lost a loved one.

When asked about their opinions about what crisis means to them, the answer that came up first from most of the participants was that crisis relates to accidents in various forms. Others relate crisis to face to face bullying and bullying in cyber space, family problems resulting in one parents being incarcerated, broken up of family relationship ending in the child protection agency of the municipality stepping in to take the children or a decision by court to give the right of custody to one of the parent, sometimes having shared custody resulting in the children having to move between the mother's and father's households.

The question on grief was answered with long narrative answers describing the youth and young adult culture and how it affects their lives. Participants expressed the importance of family and the need to have strong family bonds. Good family relationship was stressed by the majority of the participants. One of them put it this way:

> "When the tide of youth and young adults' raises the family is there to help us swim safely to the shore."

When one is young, having friends and good friendship with other young people is normally very important. Having no friends is not only sad, but it is almost cruel. This view was aired by nine out of the fifteen participants. Most participants also expressed that the social media constitute a form of excluding others and that is often felt worse than physical loneliness. In the physical world ones family is always there. Some stated that not having friends is the cruellest experiences in teenage life. Some expressed these feelings like:

When you post something on the social media and no one "like" or comment on it, it just feels like you are one lonely person in a big world." (16-17 years old)

On the question about when to seek professional help, many of the participants addressed the question by rather answering why most of them would not go to professional care givers or counsellors for help. They claim that:

"The fear to be labelled "mentally sick" is one that no one thinks is "cool", because "when you go to BUP then you are kind of sick person". Others will know because you will be missing classes, and so forth. However, if there was a place for us to just pop in at our own time and convenient, that would be nice." (18-19 years old)

To have a place to just drop in unseen was the wish of twelve out of the fifteen participants. Most of them also expressed the fact that they will see a professional only if they cannot talk to their parents yet about a problem or a situation, especially on issues related to pressure from peers about alcohol and sexual related issues.

The next question was about whether we have enough professional institutions of care giving available in the municipality. The answers were affirmative, however, many of the participants complained about the time factor, meaning that most of the time they would need to be referred to this kind of service by one's medical doctor, the school nurse, the child protection workers or any other recognised organ of the law. The Christian youth who have spoken to a pastoral care giver explained the difference between pastoral care and other types of care service providers. The most mentioned difference was with regards to the timing; pastoral care giver seems to have all the time, while other care givers do not have all the time as they must attend to the next client on their time schedule.

It was often repeated by different participants during the interviews that the youth and young adults need someone they can either call or just walk-in kind of an office, without prior appointment. They expressed a need for a place where they can feel safe and talk to someone they can trust and discuss whatever is weighing in their hearts without being put on a waiting list.

During the course of her career, the researcher has encountered youth who do prefer pastoral care to normal counselling for the fact that those who carry out pastoral care services tend to have not only special listening skills as other counsellors, but also an aura that give the youth a feeling of "being seen as they are". This aura can be described

as empathy to listen actively and this active listening demand a lot of emotional investment on the confidant. This form of listening do demand a relative openness to one's own feelings also. As one participant puts it:

> "The church staff member that I have spoken to about my situation never took notes nor looked at the watch. I felt like I could sit there and talk as long as I could, but I also knew that the pastoral care giver has other work to do. However, I was made to feel that the "sjelesorgare" (the pastoral care giver) has time for me" (18 year old[11]).

Developing an active two ways listening skill may take many years of practice. In some cases it takes personal experiences of similar situations. Pastoral care givers add their contributions to the many counselling professionals who work with the youth and young adults. Being a religious person, however, creates expectancies, grounded in the belief that religious people are servants of God. What is special with pastoral care compared with other care providers is the ability to allow people who have a religious faith to open up their inner conditions of suffering. Pastoral care givers allow confidants to express themselves uninterrupted on the most difficult questions of life. One participant has this to say about the pastoral care service he attended:

> "When I lost my brother, I received counselling help from both the church and the school nurse and BUP. However, talking to the church staff members made me feel that there is real hope. They show another level of care that put me at ease, may be is their faith in God" (16-17 year old).

As a deacon in a relatively small municipality, listening to the participants, the researcher realised that there is not that kind of pastoral care service mentioned above specifically targeted towards the youth and young adults in the municipality. Even though the church has a catechist, whose work is targeted towards children and youth aged 0 – 18, the catechist has too much work and responsibilities related to other matters, thus the expected care service for the young people from 16-18 years of age may suffer. The researcher's meeting with the young people who participated in the study reveals the need to have a well-defined service for this group (age 16-23). This important age group is more mature and has reached a higher level of intellectual development than the age group normally adhered to by the catechist. They need someone who can sit and listen to them uncorks their feelings. This opinion was echoed

---

[11] Participant gender is withheld for identity protection purposes.

by nine out of the fifteen participants in the study. A summary of the views expressed by these participants are:

> "It would have been easy maybe if we have a kind of drop-in- centre like a service for the youth. What some of us need is someone to talk to, like a grownup person whom we can discuss some of the stuff that we do not really feel like discussing with parents *yet*[12]" (16-17, 18-19 years old).

Others expressed similar need this way:

> "It would have been nice to have a place where I can come in to talk to a care giver without an appointment, but since I am not a Christian; it would be nice if such a place is on a neutral location" (20-21 year old).

Expressions from the youth that belong to other faith are even encouraging, in term of the need to carry out pastoral care among youth and young adults.

> "This is a small town and we are a small community of followers, we do not have an Imam here, and have no one to talk to us on issues of faith. If I really need that kind of help then I have to travel to a big city where there are a larger group of members and a leader who can give us counsel." But on general issues of life we are at a loss. Elder women are better off than us here, there is this meeting of theirs, but we do not have that. It would be nice I think. (22-23 years old).

Youth and young adults from different faiths who have immigrated to Norway recently acknowledged the need for a "natural[13]" caring officer not only BUP or NAV or social services worker, but someone whom they can talk to about everyday social challenges that they face since they are "foreigners". An immigrant participant expressed the need to meet the indigenous people in the town. Even though the topic was pastoral care, meeting foreigners and trying to integrate them in the society is a diaconal work, and this participant expressed the need in that respect this way.

> "We have a temple in the house, and we gather there and say our prayers to our "god"[14]. In terms of spiritual counselling, we do not really have that, but our elders advise us on issues of life. The challenge is that we are just as young as all teens in town, and we have issues that we cannot talk to our elders about. We just don't know how and where to find such general but important help" (19-20 years old).

---

[12] Italics are mine, because the participants stress on "yet" as if to make me aware that the situation can be discussed with parents at the right time.

[13] Faith and religious is seen as a natural occurring, because of the belief in the most powerful God

[14] Inverted commas mine.

As the above statements show, it seems like all youth and young adults face some issues that are not of a medical, psychologically or psychiatrically nature, but life issues that they just wish to discuss with a professional care giver, or in this case a pastoral care giver.

4.3 Crisis and grief

To the question about crisis and grief, all the fifteen participants have felt alone at some point in their lives. According to most of them this happened in their early teens. They expressed the main reason to this problem to be peer pressure, and exclusion from main groups or popular groups. Five participants expressed the feelings of loneliness specifically related to cultural differences and lack of knowledge of popular culture and language.

> "It would have been nice to have a kind of a drop in centre where young people can just come in and talk to a grownup, stuff that we are not yet ready to talk about with our parents, but which weigh on our mind any way."(16-17, 18-19 years old)

> "When I lost my parents, it became obviously difficult for my friends to talk to me, and I to them, maybe if we have such a place, where we can meet a pastoral care giver, maybe we could have learned how to handle each other" (16-17 years old)

> "I have a strong link to my parents especially my mom who is my rock, but for those who are not as fortunate as I am, I think, an available pastoral care giver would be a good idea" (18-19 years old)

> "One needs an appointment to go to the school nurse, she deals with sickness. To go to BUP is a stigma of been called Psych P. One needs a place one can uncork a bit" (16-17 years old)

> "Sometimes one sees stuff and hear stuff that one does not understand properly. It would be good to have someone who can listen and not judge you" (22-23 years old)

As to the question of who the participants feel free to talk to about their problems, there was great individual elaboration. What the researcher deduced as common feature to all participants was that, when a problem is new, the young people talk to their best friends first. If the problems persist, the next persons to talk to are the parents, if they are not the cause of the problems. Some of the participants would actually seek to talk to their spiritual leader, but that is if they are already a bit acquainted with them.

On the question of experiencing acts of bullying, exclusion or constant receiving mean words seemed to be the toughest question. All of fifteen participants said they have experienced acts of bullying and exclusion in one way or another in their life time. However, not all of them have experienced **constant** mean words.

It seems like the youth and young people have a way of protecting their parents from hurts. When they experience these acts, they find it difficult to tell their parents because they do not want their parents to feel hurt. Some of the hurtful words were not directed to the participant themselves. It could have been directed towards another family member, to a friend, and to a friend of the family.

The pain is not less when a young person thinks that the family is going to break up, and hearing the arguments that "I will take my children with me" kind of argument. One participant said: "We are children of both parents and not only one parent."

We are often not good enough to praise others for what they obviously are good at. There is a need to point out the importance of showing appreciation, not only to our parents, and family members, but also to our peers, and to others that we often interact with in our society and community circles. Appreciating others is so much more; it means seeing the best thing in another person's life. It is giving praise where it is due, and recognising the goodness in others. These acts of kindness build confidence and cultivate trust within a milieu.

> "As young people we say unkind things to each other which we do not really mean in the strongest terms, but when the mean words are said continuously that is what is not good, that is what hurts, and it becomes difficult to say or report it to anyone else. Maybe one can say it to the spiritual leaders, or to some counsellor like the pastoral care giving person." (16-17 years old)

This was echoed by five out of the fifteen participants.

Being an appreciative person, leader or coach is to have an attitude, a mind-set and an approach that brings the eyes to see the best in others, and to point that out to them. It is about giving feedbacks that awaken motivation and creates commitments that cultivate desires to be better. It is about an attitude that institutes a spirit of good social, work and living ethics, so that there is a mutual feeling of appreciation and a commitment to respect one another.

As to the question of their thoughts of establishing a diaconal youth crisis centre in the municipality, eleven out of the fifteen participants expressed the important of having such a centre. This because there is not pastoral care centre dedicated to the youth and young adults even though general pastoral care available for all people in the municipality is rendered in the church office. Many participants expressed that:

> "It will be good to have a place that one can walk in and talk to an adult about the issues that one does not want to talk to one's parents about yet." (16-17, 18-19, 20-21)

This was a statement which was strongly repeated by most of the participants. They gave examples of what they have in mind, a similar centre that is found in a shopping centre in a nearby bigger town.   Some expressed the need to have the centre at a neutral ground if it has to serve all the youth despite their religious faith.

As to what they wanted to add to the answers given in the formal interview, most participants repeated the need for a place rather than a church office, where the youth and young adults can walk-in and talk to an adult about challenges in their lives.

4.4 From pastoral care givers point of view[15]

The pastoral care givers work mostly with families that have lost a loved one through death. During the time of mourning they meet also with the children, youth and young adults in connection with the death of the loved one. The pastoral care givers claimed that they do provide pastoral care and counselling to the youth and young adults, but they stressed that it is not so often or frequent as it should. As to why the youth and young adults do not contact them, one of the pastoral care givers expressed the lack of familiarity with the youth and young adults in the municipality could be the main reason since the care giver is quite new in the municipality. This indicates that this type of pastoral care is not institutionalised but rather is based on personal interests and commitments.

The type of grief that the young people consults the pastoral care giver for, varies with each individual youth but is not often about grief caused by death.

> "I do not work with youth in grief so much… but at my formal station I did. Those that I am in contact with here did come with their family to the pastoral

---

[15] See subsection 3.1 on why the priests were interviewed

care counselling. I think the pastoral care among the youth and young adults is really a matter of trust and how familiar one is with them. I do not know most of the youth here and it may take a while before they know me" (care giver)[16].

"Parents sometimes play a role of connecting the youth to us, and these end up in a positive feeling for the youth." (Care giver)

"Sometimes the youth do contact us, with a wish to meet and talk to us, but they often back out of their appointment." (Care giver)

It may be difficult and challenging for the young people[17] to take that step forward, to seek pastoral care, because of fear of being stigmatised as being in the "system". Besides, most people, also outside the group of participants, do not know what pastoral care is. If the adults do not know what pastoral care is, it is unlikely that the young people would know more.

Most often it is the parents who contact the pastoral care or who encouraged the youth and young adults to see the pastoral care giver for help. This may also have to do with the fact that many young people are not going to church services these days, thus there is a missed opportunity to meet with the church staff members who provide care services. It is important that no one should be made to feel that they are forced to take pastoral care or counselling.

As expressed by one of the pastoral care givers in the municipality much depends on how familiar the care giver is with the young people. This means that when the youth and young adults gain confidence in the care giver, then they do approach the pastoral care giver themselves.

Pastoral care givers do not think that the present situation is satisfactory; one has to focus on how to provide the service to the youth and young adults. Therefore, the pastoral care givers who the researcher talked to are of the opinion that there is a need for improvement, especially in developing a better rapport system between pastoral care service in the community and the population of young people. One of the pastoral care givers wondered if there is a need to visit schools, just for a slotted time once or twice in a week. To make the pastoral care service readily available to the youth and young adults, it is important for the church to be present at places where the youth and young adults like to be.

---

[16] Age and gender withheld intentionally.
[17] Young people refer to the youth and young adults in this study.

4.5 Chapter conclusion

This chapter presents the research analysis and the interpretations of data as understood. Some personal accounts are presented as transcribed, and these were chosen among others because they were either statements that were common to many if not to most of the participants or they were outstanding in their own merits.

The next chapter will concentrate on discussion of the research findings and elaborate on the connection between the data and the theory, for example

- How the young people perceive pastoral care services
- What contexts do young people want to discuss
- The literature stressed the benefits of a good pastoral care giver as that of empowering the confidants
- How best can the church be readily available to the young people.

Chapter 5 Discussion

5. Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the data transcription, data analysis and interpretations. The researcher elaborated on what the participants pointed out and she interpreted the materials into the themes that emerged from the interviews.

This chapter will discuss the findings and interpretations and connect these to the theory before drawing the final conclusion from the research study and will suggest further studies in accordance with what this study points to as the most important issues to address.

5.1 Impact of social media

Becoming a grown up person has its challenges. In general, being a teenager today seems to be far more risky for the mental health than it has ever been before. This is because the world of internet and mass media is very closer in proximity to our daily life than the old fashion media (e.g. newspapers and magazines) were in the not so far past. The flow of information, both bad and good, is a finger press away, and the youth and young adults are the master in the new technology utilisation. During the interviews, the researcher met youth and young adults who dread cyber bulling and exclusion.

In a resent TV debate, we learned about the easy accessibility of illicit substance through purchase and sales over the internet. In this way, drugs and alcohol find their way to children and the youth who under normal circumstances will not have the right to buy such items over the counter. These are challenges that every society should try to curtail. The question is how? Adding pastoral care as a service from the church among the youth and young adults could be a point in a right direction to help empower the youth and curtail some of the challenges before they develop into problems.

5.1.1 Adolescence development

Adolescence is a vulnerable period in the development of a human persona that offers major upheavals - both physically and mentally. The young people try to find out who they are and what they stand for. In addition, they expect to meet the society's

numerous requirements and expectations. Increased pressure to succeed and excel in almost everything they do produces many risk factors among the young people. Many are struggling with the challenges of adulthood, exhibit stress related symptoms which might appear in the form of transient mental disorders. The risk of developing chronic diseases increases with age if these stress related symptoms are not dealt with in an early stage.

Generally, depression and anxiety are the most common complaints among adolescents. Girls are more troubled and seek more often help than boys. Conflict filled conditions in the home and small degree of social support increases the risk of such disorders. Several studies show a clear correlation between bullying and poor mental health.

5.1.2 Grief and grieving

No one chooses to grieve. Grief normally comes from outside forces, and not from the inside of a person. However, the outside forces meet with our inner feelings that react to the unnatural force that enters our inner beings. Grief as a result of death is always unexpected no matter whether the deceased was ill for a long time or short period of time. The near family members are always hoping for recovery. Therefore, no one is actually prepared enough for grief. That is why grief can be experienced as a feeling of emptiness, hurtful, lonely and a way of protest.

Whatever a person is grieving about, grief affect a person's whole persona, it affects physical and psychological and often develop into psychical conditions, because grief is able to penetrate a person's inner most feelings, cause harm to the person's feelings, social relationships, and self-confidence. Yet, the most important fact that every pastoral care giver should have in mind and know is that the each person who is grieving is the master of the situation. Only they know exactly how they feel, but the pastoral care giver can be there to assist in the process of helping the grieving person to reach out or navigate these grieving emotions and find a bearing to their strength to overcome the grief.

5.2 Research Findings

The findings of this study represent a description of pastoral care among the youth and young adults. The researcher began the interviews by asking the interlocutors to reflect on the meaning of pastoral care in terms of other care services in the society. The

common theme that emerged confirmed that the youth and young adults did not know that pastoral care is a total holistic care that the priest and deacons give to anyone who needs care and counselling in all matters that affect a person's wellbeing.

> "Our cultures play a role in the way that we can trust people of other faith. I am a Muslim and trusting a Christian priest would not be the first thing in my mind, but since I have friends who are Christians, maybe dropping in to talk to a deacon at a neutral ground is more likely than talking to a priest really" (18-19, 20-21)

Contact with youth and young adults from different parts of the world indicated that there are other factors that influence the young people's lives; the parents' faith and original culture, and the parents' standard of education. The parents' faiths affect most of the young people, but the standard of education affects only the immigrant youth and young adults (this reference is purely on seeking pastoral care services and not on general terms). Yet, the everyday social influence of present culture is also strong as the young people emulate the culture of the society they are living in and consider as their new home.

These comments draw our attention to the inner states of mind of people who have bi-cultural and may have experienced multicultural identities. The fragmented literature addressing the issue of inner search for understanding the differences between cultures remains open and receptive of different parts of the phenomenal that are practiced in the new culture.

The young people quoted above also expressed the lack of information about what pastoral care offers that is available from the church irrespective of faith. Most of the participants however, demonstrated that they were aware that the church offers pastoral care when one loses a loved one and a follow up pastoral care system available to all bereaved families and friends of the deceased person. However, they were not aware that one can go to the pastoral care giver for advice on any other problems including those not related faith.

The youth did not also know that pastoral care is available when their loved ones are terminal ill or when they are facing other challenges of life – growing up for example. Eight of the participants expressed this wish thus:

> "I wish that many young people know that pastoral care is open to all, and not only to those who are active in the church". (22-23).

Two of the participants who have experienced un-expected death of loved ones expressed need for of a pastoral care service group in these words:

> "I have been to pastoral care after I lost my brother but the service provided was too far from where I live and needed either my parents or someone to drive me there, so I kind of just gave up attending the session. However, the experience was quit good and helpful. I met other young people like me who were also grieving from a loss of a loved one through death". (Age and gender withheld)

> "Even though my dad was ill for a while, I was still shocked when he passed away. The pastoral care youth group was good for me, but the service is far away so getting there was always a problem. I wish there was such a service here. We need someone to talk to not only because we are mourning our loved ones, but there are other problems too that we young people have and need help with…" (Age and gender withheld)

Talking to the participants from different faith was also interesting, because it revealed the need to be there and meeting all young people despite their faith or their religion. As one participant puts it:

> "I am new here, and living here has its advantages and disadvantages. We are a small community of followers here, and if one has problems that one need counselling from the leaders of one's faith, then I need to travel either to Oslo or some other towns or city where they have elders of my faith" (18-18)

It might be true, as interpreted from many of the interviewees, that the church may not advice or counsel others on faith-based problems, or religious based problems. The question is, should the pastoral care service of a church provide advice and counselling on other grounds than people's faith? Being a deacon, and practicing "loving ones neighbour as oneself or building bridges between the church and the society, the researcher considers some of her duties as embedded in seeing each person as they are. This means that seeing all people as created in God's image, and practice loving one's neighbour despite differences in faith or beliefs.

Pastoral care is about reaching out to people who need someone to talk to, that can be a person of Christian faith, or a person of different faith, or a person of no faith. The pastoral care giver is someone who shall be sympathetic and exhibit characteristics that show that they have empathy for other people. This means that they should be able to put themselves in the position of others' feelings in an effort to try to understand them.

Even though one should never take over the suffering of another person (in this case the confidant), still one should be able to put one's feelings into the situation and try to help the grieving confidant from that point of view.

Is there a link between active church attendance and pastoral care and counselling?

The study shows that for the youth and young adults who are closely related to the church either because their families are strong church members, or because of their own interest and will, they would consider pastoral care services if they have problems.

Some participants pointed out that there are certain kinds of problems that would be best solved by other institutions than the church, while a number of needs can be solved through religious care counselling, for example marriage, boyfriend/girlfriend relationship, and peer pressure issues related to sex or abuse of alcohols and illicit substances like drugs. Some of the participants also stated that issues of bullying and exclusion can also be better handled by a pastoral care giver.

The study findings and the data analysis clearly shows that most of the youth and young adults who participated in the study would prefer to have an open care service office, which they called "drop in centre", where they can talk to a qualified person about their grievances or their challenges of life, without waiting for a referral from the school nurse, and or personal doctor.

5.3 Connecting the theory to practice

The importance of inter-relationship between pastoral care practices and grounded theories of caring ministries of the church has been highlighted in this research paper. In daily life, religious activities create expectancy, and these expectations are grounded in the belief that pastoral care givers are people who believe in the goodness of God. Pastoral care then carries out the functions of helping people to grow stronger both in their faith in God, and faith in themselves – stronger to face difficult situations, and to solve their problems by achieving maturity in the situations. The essence of pastoral care is good communication techniques.

The paper is about the youth and young adults' views on pastoral care provided by the Norwegian church in the municipality where the research was conducted. Why should

this group of young people be a concern for the deacons? The answer to this question may be found in the definition for deacons as stated in the Plan for Diakon 2008. The definition stipulates clearly what a deacon is in terms of the Norwegian church.

5.3.1 Diakonia is

- The caring ministry of the Church.
- the Gospel in action and
- is expressed through;
    - ➢ loving your neighbour,
    - ➢ creating inclusive communities,
    - ➢ caring for creation and
    - ➢ struggling for justice

What does it mean to be a caring ministry of the church? This statement does not mean that other ministry in the church are not caring; however this statement means that diakonia is that part of the ministry of the church that should show care indiscriminately.

When looking at the definition each and every deacon may have a perception of what this means to them but in general, the definition is a simple commission for each deacon to be available among God's creations, practicing the living gospel with their exemplary actions and good deed to all mankind.

These are statements that should awaken the inner being of the human soul to feelings of empathy for others, a willingness to go a mile longer for another human being in need, to comfort, to listen and to be available when and where there is need for someone to talk to. This is the reason why the researcher who is a deacon would like to raise the concerns for the groups of young people.

When the researcher started the process of writing this dissertation, she had in mind to find out what the church need to do in order to make the young people aware that the church also provides "social services" counselling in the form of pastoral care. Her association with the young people in the municipality she works open a window, where she saw a need for youth and young adults to be seen as they are in their own culture. A culture that challenges the "formal way of looking at the church and its functions, yet a

culture that has its roots in the main culture of the society, a modern culture independent, and self-sufficiency even at a tender age.

According to Carroll A. Wise, religious expectancy is grounded in an understanding of the nature of human life. She points out that the expectancy that religion creates is basically sound, but often misunderstood and misapplied. Pastoral counselling is a means of implementing that expectancy (Wise, 2013).

Wise further points out that pastoral counselling is not about formulating ultimate truth in any given situation, however, pastoral counselling is an attempt to formulate a process through which people can be helped to grow in strength to meet and solve their problems, and to achieve a positive understanding or acceptance of their situations and not look at their circumstances as a form of "punishment" or "curse" (Wise, 2013).

Pastoral care and counselling are open to questions, experimentation, modifications and re-adjustments as new facts and deeper insights into various situations are attained (ibid). What it meant here is that different problems and situational cases help the formulation of new knowledge. This would also apply for developing pastoral care that is tailored for today's youth and young adults.

The essence of counselling is communication, and communication is effective when attention and understanding takes place between those who are communicating to each other and with each other. Pastoral care and counselling must be able to know the differences in communication to conceal a bigger problem, and communication to reveal deeper hurts. Communication is the conveying of experience in term of their meaning. Pastoral care involves communicating painful experiences, suffering, or various emotional pains and deep hurts. In the context of the findings of this study, communication with young people may require special skills in order to be able to reach the minds of this group of people. It also requires a thorough consideration of establishing alternative meeting places.

The key to a successful pastoral care encounter, lies on the ability of the pastoral care giver to ask questions that facilitate the care receiver to go deep into their soul in search for solutions to their problems, and actually bring these to the suffice of their mind and be able to see the light in the darkness situation that is being discussed. The church and a trained deacon would be well place to do so.

With time, the youth and young people's need changes. As they grow, and move to new societies and environments, they may break away from their formal links and groupings and establish new friendships and new groups. The new age level, new environment and new societal living may be experienced as a healing process and renewal of energy for some. These may also be experienced as difficult challenges by others. One cannot predict life and its outcome in a precise manner. It is particular important that when young people move to new places and do not find themselves able to deal with the new way of living, they should have a place to go to seek for counselling help. Pastoral care could be a good solution for many, especially for those who are familiar with this possibility in their former places of living. The church in one municipality could also facilitate access to pastoral care services in another municipality for those in need for such services.

In this present time the deacons have a very important work to do, not only as pastoral care giver or as "bridge builders" but as people who can serve their societies by being available to all who need their expert help, that of caring and loving the neighbour as oneself, and also to be present in ordinary people's everyday life. This means that the pastoral care giver must have an easy accessible place where people of the community know where to find him or her.

The deacons are professionally strong when it comes to pastoral care work and elderly pastoral care is quit central for deacons, they do have a strong work ethics among the youth and young people and among children. This resource should be better utilised. The young people need someone who does see them, go together with them in the difficult "room" or someone who can be a mentor, a guide, or person they can relate to in the level of trust, friendliness and understanding.

Some teenagers are living in families where relationships between parents are broken down. There is an increase in violence within societies, an increase in the misuse of alcohols and illicit substances and others. These are problems that inhibit good personal development of a youth and young adult; these are problems that create uncertainty within a child's mind. These are challenges of society as a whole and not only at the personal level. The church should be available for the "flock". It is God's commission upon the church to do good, and when the youth and young people are at peace within themselves and others, then society is at peace and development is on a sturdy path. The

church with its pastoral care is well positioned to contribute more and to help out in these types of problems.

5.4 Research conclusion

The primary objective of the study undertaken in this dissertation has been to shed light on the young people's knowledge about pastoral care as an additional service in the municipality. A range of literatures aimed at exploring pastoral care and counselling were reviewed in order to refine the understanding of theoretical application of Pastoral care. The literature confirmed that pastoral care is useful when it comes to counselling grieving people, and it is much easier to get hold of a pastoral care giver since there are no complicated referral procedures. However the literature shows a gap, because little is written on pastoral care among young people. The study undertaken involved taking an approach which views pastoral care service from the perspective of the participants themselves and the pastoral care givers themselves also.

This paper has defined pastoral care as a holistic profession in terms of helping and delivering a service to the community and to people who are experiencing difficulties in their personal, academics and general life. A holistic profession that provide a service to the youth and young adults, who may have tried some other forms of counselling and found it unsatisfactory, or just need something different. A holistic profession that provide service to anyone who may be facing different types of grief and sorrow as a result from different circumstances rather that those mentioned above.

The paper discussed at length the need to have pastoral care as part of the counselling services that are available in the municipality, and with the help of the participants' candid information, the researcher is made to understand the need for pastoral care services in a new light. Pastoral care practices reflect and support particular understandings of the self and the world, and the care giver helps their confidants understand the normative views of what is good and what is wrong, and further opt for what is physically and mentally healthy and what is unhealthy.

It is important to realise that the sample on which the findings are base was rather limited in size and that the voluntary nature of participation may have resulted in a selective group of young people who were either more religious or who have experienced severe problems in their lives.

5.5 Research outlook and proposed need for further research study

The research questions for this study as outlines in section 1.4 of this paper, was: How can pastoral care be made more available to young people to come for care and counselling? The secondary questions were: Do young adults and the youth in particular know and understand what pastoral care and practices are? What contents and form of pastoral care young people would be interested in?

Issues that arise while carrying out this study were that young people did not know pastoral care exist for all grievances. Some participants expressed the need to have pastoral care for the youth and young adults on a neutral place rather than in the church office.

However, there are many other issues to be studied and considered in order to have an effective and functional church pastoral care service in place dedicated to the youth and young adults.

Therefore, the researcher hopes that this study will be followed up so that others in the same situations as the participants in this study can get the help they need and not live behind the "walls" of pain and of differences in religions. Everyone needs to be met with love and care in joy and in sorrow. All children and young people must be met and cared for just as they are. It should be a matter of course that we share our vulnerability and talk about the big questions and the challenges and crises that life brings. In expressing sorrow and pain, language, symbolic actions and counselling can be ways to give help and support. The researcher strongly believes that the young people of today need to experience the love of God in their lives.

The discussion in this chapter shows that recent popular trends have come with their advantage and disadvantages. The young people are often the culprit of these trends, resulting in unsatisfactory low opinion of how one looks or how one act. Mothers and fathers are often no more the role model of their children, but rather are replaced by images that are appearing on TV and other social media. In parallel, several youth and young adults are concerned about the number of calories they consume and work hard on calculating the calories that they consume a day, build bodies by spending hours in the gym and fitness houses. These activities are not bad in themselves, but when they are done or practiced because one is very unhappy of how one looks that is when the

trend becomes a bad one. Some young people stop eating breakfast and others even lunch. This is particularly true for girls, who are generally more concerned with body and weight. Many families live a hectic life style, where work and leisure activities restrict the ability to gather around regular meals. These and other social trends imposed life styles that wear down heavily on the youth and young adults who are already trying to balance the challenges of adolescent life.

When deacons meet the Christian youth, it is imperative to make the youth and young adults aware of the biblical terms that inform us of God and his plan for redemption and his love. If we want our Christian youth and young adults to identify with the church, then we should diligently teach them the language of Christ. This is because, the un-reflected life does not satisfy nor does it withstands the pressure of life. It does not serve God effectively either.

The church has to focus on how to provide the pastoral care to the young people. No one should be made to feel that they are forced to take pastoral care and counselling. The church has the competence required. Maybe it would be helpful if the pastoral care givers have a time in the schools, just for a slotted time maybe once in a week or two.

It was hoped that this paper would find ways of informing the young people about pastoral care. The findings of the study would help the church and others likeminded institutions to enlighten the young people about care that the church provides. The church is a sanctuary of peace, a place where everyone is seen as they are, and a place of refuge for anyone and especially for those who are facing adversity in various forms. Again, it was hoped that the study findings would inform the church about ways to develop better pastoral care service for all the young people, not only when they have lost their loved ones in death, but also when they encounter social problems.

Hearing these testimonies in this interview setting gave the researcher the courage to think that a research like this is important and that a follow up study in a bigger scale would be beneficial, not only for the pastoral care from the church, but also to other types of care services in the society.

The church can work as a facilitator of peace in families that are struggling with relationships either as married couples, parents towards their children and any other behavioural problems that are not yet a psychiatrics problem; young people should have

the possibility to choose among the institutions, which have different approaches to problems.

5.6.1 Reflection on the study

The researcher's own church cultural up-bringing may have influenced the researcher's understanding of the Norwegian church's culture. Culture is a very difficult concept to define, because it consists of ideals, values and assumptions about life that guide specific behaviours (Berry et al. 2002). Maybe the researcher's conception of Norwegian young people in the small town in which the research has been undertaken is more like that of Lawrence the English man in an Arab society:-

> *"In my case the efforts for these years to live in the dress of Arabs, and imitate their mental foundation quitted me of my English self, and let me look at the West and its conventions with new eyes:… I could believe it would be near the man who could see things through the veils at once of two customs, two educations, two environments"* (Lawrence, 1962, p.30).

These comments draw our attention to the inner states of mind of people who have bi-cultural and may have experienced multicultural identities. The fragmented literature addressing the issue of inner search for understanding the differences between cultures remains open and receptive of different parts of the phenomenal that are practiced in the new culture – in the researcher's case the religious culture in Norway in general and in the municipality in particular. Her contact with youth and young adults in the ministry from different parts of the world indicate that the parents' original culture and standard of education somewhat influence these youth and young adults. Yet, the everyday social influence of present culture is also strong as the young people emulate the culture of the society they are living in and consider as their new home.

References

Alford, R.A. (1998) The Craft of Inquiry: Theories, methods, evidence. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Bassey. M. (1999). Case Study Research in Educational Settings. Open University Press. Buckingham.

Berry, J., Poortinga, Y, Segall, M., Dasen, P. (2002) Cross-Cultural Psychology: Research and Applications, Research and Adaptation, Second Edition, Cambridge University Press, UK.

Best, R. (1995) Care and education: the comparative perspective, in: R. Best, P. Lang & A. Lichtenberg (Eds) Caring for children: international perspectives in pastoral care and PSE (London, Cassell) 3–12.

Best, R. (2009) Pastoral care: some reflections and a restatement. Pastoral Care in Education Vol. 7, Iss. 4,1989 (Internet Source read on 11.08.2016)

Brendtro, L. K. (2008). Reclaiming Children and Youth, v17 n2 p11-18 Sum 2008. 8 pp.

Brown, A. & Dowling, P. (1998) Doing Research/Reading Research: A Mode of Interrogation for Education. New York, Routledge.

Bryman, A. (2008). Social Research Methods (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Calvert, M. (2009) 'From 'pastoral care' to 'care' meanings and practices' in Pastoral Care in Education, 27(4) 267-278.

Clinebell, H. (1984). Basic Types of Pastoral Care & Counseling Revised: Resources for the Ministry of Healing & Growth. Nashville, TN: Abington Press.

Clinebell, H. J., & McKeever, B. C. (2011). Basic Types of Pastoral Care and Counseling: Resources for the Ministry of Healing and Growth. Nashville: Abingdon Press.

Cohen, L. Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2008.) *Research Methods in Education*. USA, Routledge.

Creswell, J. (1998). The five traditions. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches. SAGE Publications Inc.

Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (2000). Handbook of Qualitative Research, 2ndedn, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Department of Education and Science (1989) Pastoral care in secondary schools: an inspection of some aspects of pastoral care in 1987–88 (London, DES).

Dooley, S. (1980) The relationship between the concepts of 'pastoral care' and 'authority', in: R. Best, C. Jarvis, & P. Ribbins (Eds) Perspectives on pastoral care(London, Heinemann), 16–24.

Eide, Ø. M. (2014). Forståelse og fordypning. Perspektiv på den sjelesørgiske samtalen. Oslo: Luther forlag AS.

Engedal, L.G. (2004). Kristen sjelesorg i en postmoderne kultur. Utfordringer og muligheter. I: MA. Ekedahl & B.Wiedel (red.) Mötet med den splittrade människan. Om själavård i postmodern tid. Stockholm: Verbum.

Espedal, G. (2016). Løsningsfokusert Sjelesorg. Gyldendal Akademisk.

Flyvbjerg, Bent (2006) Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research. *Qualitative Inquiry,* 12: 219.

Graser, B., & Strauss, A. (1999[1967]).The discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research. New York Aldine de Gruyter.

Grønmo, S. (2004). *Samfunnsvitenskapelig metoder*, Bergen: Fagbokforlaget.

Holstein, J., & Gubrium, J. (1995).The Active Interview in Perspective, Chapter 2, The Active Interview. London: Sage.

Hughes, P. M. (1980) Pastoral care: the historical context, in: R. Best, C. Jarvis & P. Ribbins (Eds) Perspectives on pastoral care (London, Heinemann), 25–32.

Hummelvoll, J.K. (2010). Forskningsetikk i handlingsorientert forskningssamarbeid med mennesker med psykiske problemer. Kap. 2 i I: Hummelvoll, JK, Andvig, E., Lyberg, A. (2010). *Etiske utfordringer i praksisnær forskning*. Oslo: Gyldendal akademisk.

Johannessen,A., Tufte, ,P.A. og Christoffersen, L. (2010). Introduksjon til samfunnsvitenskapelig metode(4. utg). Oslo: Abstrakt forlag AS.

Johannessen, K. I., Jordheim, K., Korslien, K.K. (2009). Diakoni en kritisk lesebok. Tapir adademisk forlag.

Joppe, M. (2000). The Research Process. Retrieved 04.2015, from http://www.ryerson.ca

Kirkwood, N.A. (2012). Pastoral care to Muslims. Building Bridges. New York: Routledge.

Lartey, E.Y. (2003). In Living Color. An Intercultural Approach to pastoral Care and Counseling. London and Philadelphia, Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Lawrence, T. E. (1962). Seven pillars of wisdom. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Lynch, G. (2002). Pastoral Care & Counselling. SAGE Publications London

Mandela, N. (2003). A fabric of care. In K. Asmal, D. Chidester, & W. James (Eds.), Nelson Mandela: From freedom to the future (pp.416-418). Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers.

Miles, M.B. (1994) Qualitative Data Analysis: An expanded sourcebook. London, Sage.

Miller, W., Giles, C. A. (2012).The Arts of Contemplative Care: Pioneering Voices in Buddhist Chaplaincy and Pastoral Work.

Okkenhaug, B. (2002). Når jeg ser ditt ansikt, Oslo, Verbun forlag.

Patton, J. (2005). Pastoral Care in Context: An Introduction to Pastoral Care. Westminster John Knox Press, Louisville. (Internet book as read 07.2016).

Petersen, B. L. (2007). Foundations of Pastoral Care. Kansas City, Mo: Nazarene Publishing House.

Scottish Executive (2004) Children and young people's mental health (Edinburgh, Scottish Executive). Pastoral Care in Education Vol. 29, No. 2, June 2011, pp. 67–82

Silverman, D. (2006). Interpreting Qualitative Data 3rd Edition. SAGE Publications Inc. London.

Sletten M. A. (2015) Psykiske plager blant ungdom Sosiale Forskjeller og Historien om de Flinke Pikene (PDF) read on 28/06/2016.

Stark, S. and Torrance, H. (2005) 'Case study', in Somekh, B. and Lewin, C. (eds) Research Methods in the Social Sciences. London, Sage.

Sturman, A. (1994) 'Case study methods', in Keeves, J.P. (ed.) Educational Research, Methodology, and Measurement: An international handbook (2nd ed.). Oxford, Pergamon

Taylor S.J., Bogdan R., DeVault M. (2016). Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods: A Guidebook and Resource. John Wiley and Sons Inc., Hoboken New Jersey.

Thagaard, T. (2013). Systematikk og innlevelse. En innføring i kvalitativ metode. 4 utgave Fagbokforlaget Vigmostad &Bjørke AS.

The Holy Bible (1982). New international Version. Zondervan Publishers

Wise, C.A. (2013). Pastoral Counselling – Its Theory and Practice. Read Books Ltd. (E-book).

Yin, Robert K (2003) Case Study Research: Design and Methods. USA, Sage Publications Inc.

https://www.etikkom.no/Forskningsetikk/God-forskningspraksis/Etikk-og-metode/ read on 30/05/2014.

www.etikkom.no The National Committees for Research Ethics in Norway (2006) as read on 30/05/2014.

Appendix A

Research Consent Form to be signed by Participants

Dear Participant,

My name is Betty A. Ndea Søvik. I am a student I am studying for a Master's degree in Diakonia.

What does it involve?

I will spend some time in your school and also carry out interviews with some young people. . If you agree to take part (by signing this form) I would like to tape-record the interview to help me to take an accurate account of our conversation. However, if you do not want to be tape-recorded, let me know and I will try to take notes.

Questions

If you have any questions about the research please contact me on my mobile telephone number 26500243 or through my email: bnsovik@yahoo.co.uk or contact Ms. Kari Karsrud Korslien høgskolelektor E-post kari.korslien@vid.no Telefon +47 22 45 19 07; 922 97 269, Studiested Diakonhjemmet, Oslo, Or the project supervisor Anne Austad E-post anne.austad@vid.no Telefon +47 22 45 19 10, 924 46 904. Studiested Diakonhjemmet, Oslo.

If you agree to take part, please sign this form.

I have read and understood the information about this research study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and I am free to withdraw my participation at any time without giving a reason. I have received a copy of the above consent and desire of my own free will and volition to participate in this study.

Participant's Name:

_____Gender:_Male;☐   Female:☐

Signature:

_____Date_____

By signing this form, I agree to take part in this project and to: ☐ be voice recorded

during the interview sessions. ☐Not to be voice recorded during the interview sessions.

Thank you very much

Appendix B Interview guide

Interview Questions

Introduction:

Thank you very much for agreeing to take part in my project.

I would like to ask you some questions about the importance of pastoral care among the youth, and young adults. If there are some questions you do not wish to answer you have the right not to. The answers given in this interview will be highly confidential, that is to say that no part of the answers you give shall lead the readers to identify the source of the information. I would like you to answer the following questions as truthful as you can, and please try and answer all the questions if you can. It is also okay to say that you do not want to answer a question. Feel free to tell me how you feel about the questions and you have the right to withdraw your participation if you feel that the questions are too much for you. Please bear in mind that when I use the term "pastoral care" I mean all people who have the functional power or authority in any faith or religion and not necessarily a "clergy and deacon" in the Christian faith. Yet I shall do my best to report the information in its authentic form. The data collected is purely for the purpose of the study module on interview and shall not be used for any other purposes.

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed and to be voice recorded.

Part 1: Back ground information

1. Your age range between 14-15; 16-17; 18-19; 20-23.
2. What religion do you belong to?
3. Do you attend the place of worship in your religion?
4. In your opinion what is the significance of church or your place of worship to you?
5. In your opinion what is pastoral care?
6. Apart from family members (if they are not the cause of the grief) who will you seek for counselling on a problem you are facing? Why?

Part 2. Pastoral, social and health cares in the society

7. Do you know the different between these caregiving organs?
8. How would you describe the difference between diakonia and other social services and, if there is any difference?
9. What does the term crisis means to you?
10. What does the term grief means to you?
11. In your opinion, what type of situations one needs to see a professional help?

12. Do you think that we have enough professional institutions of care giving available to the youth?

13. Do you find these institutions to be readily available whenever you need to speak to someone?

Part 3. Questions about crisis and grief

14. Have you ever felt alone at a point in your life?

15. Whom did you feel confident to talk to about your situation?

16. Have you ever experience act of bullying/exclusion or constant mean words

17. Do you think that we need to have a diakonalt youth crisis centre in the Municipality? Can you explain your answer please?

18. Do you have anything else you would like to say or to add to what you have already said?

Part 4. Follow up questions to the priests

1. Do you work with youth and young adults who are in grief?

2. What type of grief do the youth and young adults come to you with? Do they contact you themselves or through their parents or families?

3. What type of counsel do you have with the youth?

4. Do you think that is enough?

5. In your opinion is there a need for improvement in pastoral care among the youth and young adults? Can you elaborate on your answer please?